JULY, 1959

Ballet TODAY

MARGOT FONTEYN
takes a bow at the Royal Opera House, London
after a performance of
GISELLE

Price 2/-

EDITOR
ESTELLE HERF

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Hope Sheridan reviews the new production of the Bolshoi ballet *The Stone Flower*, and the remainder of their season in New York.

Walter Gore writes an appreciation of Ashley Dukes.

The third Company to be featured in our *Ballet Around the World* series (*No.* 1 *Japan*, *No.* 2 *Canada*).

Careers in Pictures, *Backstage*, *News from the World*, and all the usual features.

Please remember:

Ballet Today is published monthly except for two combined issues a year—Jan./Feb. and Aug./Sept. Our next issue is therefore one of the combined editions (Aug./Sept.) and this will be published on the 13th August.

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Editor's Log

A recent photograph of Alice Nikitina

Michael Somes and his wife Deirdre Dixon, together in New York during the Royal Ballet's 1957 tour of the United States.

Rowena Jackson and Philip Chatfield in *Giselle* Act 11. *Photo:* Houston Rogers

OF MANY TALENTS

Ask anyone outside ballet circles to tell you what the word " ballerina " conjures up in their minds and they will probably reply " a rather haughty, Garbo-ish remote creature, not of this world but loaded with temperament and a " Grand Hotel " manner. The subject came up at a cocktail party given by Allan Wingate to launch publication of an autobiography by Alice Nikitina, star of Diaghilev days. " And " said Dame Adeline Genée who was present " it is only of recent years that anyone thought a dancer could also have a *brain* ".

I had started the ball rolling by saying that in a life which had brought me into touch with celebrities from many worlds I had never met such charming, modest hardworking less mercenary people than ballet dancers, and as for temperament, well I had never seen a trace of it. " Well we haven't time for *that* ", agreed Dame Adeline.

But they find time for many other things. Nikitina for instance was not satisfied with being a star in a great Company, being fêted in cities throughout the world, she also became an equally famous singer. At the present time she is teaching dancing in her own school in Paris and has organised an international yearly event at which the most promising pupil is granted a scholarship called " The Prix Terpsichore ". It is difficult to see how she also found time to write a book, but read it for yourself—a lifetime of endeavour set down in simple naive fashion.

And time deals very lightly with these great ones of ballet. Dame Adeline told me she had been up the previous night until the early hours of the morning and after leaving the cocktail party she was off to a dinner. Quite a day for an eighty-one-year-old ! (It is only a few months ago that Ivor Guest's book on this great ballerina was also published.)

OPENING NIGHT

Another party during the month was Marie Rambert's after the opening night of her Company's Sadler's Wells season. At curtain fall the dancers brought her on stage and the applause and cheers rang through the theatre again and again so that she was unable to address the audience. Finally she mimed that she wished to speak. Madame has recently lost her husband Ashley Dukes,* and as the little figure in black stood there on the stage one felt sympathy going out to her over the footlights. She said a few words, thanking the audience and telling them that the Company's success depended upon them, and the little skip with which she ran off stage delighted them all over again.

At the party afterwards Madame seemed tireless, and she explained (with plenty of action) why she liked the new ballet *Hazana* by Norman Morrice, premièred that evening. The story of the ballet is the effort of one man to complete the building of a church by erecting the Cross. None of the other workmen think it worthwhile. " You see ", said Madame, " the ballet makes it so clear that one man was not only interested in the money for the job, he also felt the job was worthwhile—and wanted so desperately to see it done ". This is not only the story of their new ballet, it has also been the guiding principle of Madame Rambert's own life.

OF MORTAL FLESH

How apt we are to forget that these delightful people who enchant us with their artistry are also of flesh and blood beset with the problems and troubles of all mortals. The Royal Ballet season which has just come to a close brought this home to many of us. Every dancer in the Company was deeply shocked and saddened by the death of the beautiful young girl Deirdre Dixon, wife of Michael Somes, at the age of 25 in London on May 27th. There can be no doubt that it was a great strain for Michael Somes to fulfil his engagements for the rest of the season, and watching him with Fonteyn one became conscious of the common bond of sadness between them, for she too has had to sink her personal worry and distress at the long separation from her husband, still in political asylum in the Brazilian Embassy.

I have hitherto refrained from commenting on the " Panama affair " because for me, at any rate, Dame Margot's reported statement in New Zealand that " one word from her husband and she would give up ballet " is the key to the whole situation. What her

*__Walter Gore__ *writes an appreciation of Ashley Dukes in our next issue.*

EDITOR'S LOG

(continued)

husband says goes; that kind of devotion can lead any woman into curious situations, and for one as warmhearted as Margot Fonteyn loyalty would always take precedence to caution.

SAYING GOODBYE

A large ballet company is like a small community in itself, and sometimes the real-life stories of its members are far more exciting than any of the roles they portray on stage. This season the Royal Ballet Company members have had their share of joy and sorrow, but I end my *Log* this month on a note of domestic bliss, even though this too is tinged with the sadness of saying goodbye to two of the Company's most loved members. I refer of course to Rowena Jackson and Philip Chatfield who are retiring from ballet. Rowena's statement that she is " a home girl " is no publicity stunt. I remember as far back as 1957 when I wanted to write her story I asked Miss Jackson for photographs, to illustrate the feature. I expected to receive photographs of her in her most glamorous roles, but instead two photographs arrived, one of Rowena standing at a table in her home in New Zealand, and the other showed her clasping the largest, merriest baby I have evern seen (her sister's). She also told me that her mother had travelled from New Zealand three times to join her. Then came her marriage of course and almost immediately afterwards Rowena and Philip's joint tour of Australia and New Zealand with the Royal Ballet. It is understandable therefore that once having returned to New Zealand the home ties became too strong to surrender. The surprising thing is that these two young people at the zenith of their career have the *courage* to give up everything they have worked for so long and so hard for the anonymity of domestic life and to raise a family.

To mark the occasion of their retirement Philip Chatfield was asked to cut the " Taglioni Cake " a ceremony which is performed on the last day of the Royal Ballet season each year. The cake was first made in 1957 and was cut by Alicia Markova, the following year Frederick Ashton performed this ceremony. The recipe for the cake was found among the letters of the famous ballerina Marie Taglioni (1804-1884) and presented to the Royal Ballet by Mr. Cyril Beaumont, the celebrated ballet historian.

Other "casualties" of the last Australian/New Zealand tour are Patricia Cox and her husband Leslie White, who decided to remain in Australia when the Royal Ballet returned to this country. There is no truth, however, in the statement made recently that Anne Heaton is also planning to retire from ballet.

FESTIVAL BALLET

Noel Coward's new ballet *London Morning* which is to have its world première on July 14th at the Royal Festival Hall when Festival Ballet commence their London season, is also to be televised by Associated-Rediffusion on August 3rd. The arrangement for presenting *London Morning* is a further project under the recently announced agreement between Associated-Rediffusion and Mr. S. A. Gorlinsky, the impresario, under which concert, opera, ballet and theatre stars will be presented on television by the London weekday independent television company in a series of programmes which start in September.

It is also another landmark in the history of television and Festival Ballet for it is the first time that a new ballet has been televised in full so soon after its première.

The Company have just returned from another highly successful tour abroad and during their London season will be celebrating their tenth anniversary at the Royal Festival Hall.

Odile-Odette. A new picture of Marilyn Burr taken during Festival Ballet's recent tour of Spain.

ON THE RECORD

Balletomanes will soon be able to secure a permanent record of the voices of famous personalities talking about various aspects of ballet. Jupiter Recordings announce that the first four recordings, of Adeline Genée, Tamara Karsavina, Marie Rambert and Beryl Grey, will be issued in the autumn.

News here and there . . . . . .

SUMMER COURSE

The American Ballet Centre, official school of the Robert Joffrey Theatre Ballet Company will hold its annual summer course during the eight weeks from July 6th to August 28th. Robert Joffrey, founder-director of the Centre was at one time with the Roland Petit Company and before founding his own school was a teacher at the High School of Performing Arts and the Ballet Theatre School in New York. He is director of the Robert Joffrey Theatre Ballet, now in its fifth year, which begins a coast-to-coast tour in October for Columbia Artists Management. Mr. Joffrey has also choreographed for the New York City Opera, the NBC-TV Opera Theatre, American Ballet Theatre, and our own Ballet Rambert.

STRAVINSKY RECEIVES DANISH AWARD

Igor Stravinsky received the Sonning Music Award, Denmark's newest and biggest cash prize for musical achievement in Copenhagen on May 26. The Russian-born composer and conductor, now an American citizen, was given a cheque for 50,000 kroner (about 7,000 dollars) by Knud Aage Riisager, internationally known Danish composer and head of the Danish Academy of Music, at a ceremony at the concert hall of Copenhagen's Tivoli Gardens. The ceremony was the climax of the annual Danish Music and Ballet Festival.

LINCOLN CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, NEW YORK

On May 14, President Eisenhower performed the ground-breaking ceremony for the Lincoln Centre for the Performing Arts, New York. Power shovels immediately began the excavation for the first building to be constructed—Philharmonic Hall—the new home for the New York Philharmonic Orchestra.

The air-conditioned building, including its furnishing, is estimated to cost $9,850,000. It is to be completed in the summer of 1961.

Other buildings to be built at Lincoln Centre are Metropolitan Opera House, 3,800 seating capacity, Theatre for Dance and Operetta (2,200), Repertory Drama Theatre (1,200), Juilliard School Theatre (900), Chamber Music and Recital Hall (600).

It is expected that it will take four years to complete the site.

LONDON NEWS

Peter Darrell will be the choreographer for the Sadler's Wells production of Franz Lehar's operetta *The Land of Smiles* which is to follow *Die Fledermaus* at the Coliseum commencing 9th July.

The new revue entitled *One to Another* to be presented at the Lyric Opera House, Hammersmith for 6 weeks commencing 15th July will include sketches and lyrics written by a number of famous people, among them John Cranko.

LONDON REVIEWS

by FERNAU HALL

SPANISH DANCERS FLOCK TO TOWN

PILAR LOPEZ AND HER SPANISH BALLET COMPANY AT THE PRINCES THEATRE

What a strange company is that of Pilar Lopez! Strong in men, with a good variety of types of *bailaores*, but correspondingly weak in danseuses. It is called a ballet company, but it performs no ballets worthy of the name: *El Café de Chinitas*, which fills the second half of the programme, is in fact a cuadro flamenco (with the usual sequence of songs and dances) given in an appropriate café setting. The title of the company is PILAR LOPEZ AND HER SPANISH BALLET, even though the talents of Pilar Lopez as a dancer (as distinct from a castanet-player) are sadly limited: her back is stiff, her footwork is dull (tending to get slower as the music speeds up), and her smile is embarrassingly arch; even if she played castanets like Argentina one could hardly be expected to overlook such choreographic deficiencies.

The best item in the first half of the programme, when the season commenced on the 11th May, was *Bolero Clásico con Cachucha*, performed by Alberto Portillo, a guest artist who specializes in *baile clásico español:* he has quite good elevation, beats his *entrechats* and *cabrioles* well, and has graceful arms. But in this style (which is based on the ballet technique) well-pointed feet are very important, and Alberto Portillo needs to do a lot of work on his insteps before he can stand comparison with a dancer like Antonio.

Choreographically the first half of the programme was at times infuriating—particularly in the suite of regional dances; for in almost no case was there any attempt to bring together the characteristic steps and ground-patterns of the regions. It is rarely possible to put on the stage in its pure form a particular folk dance from a particular village, for any one dance tends to be monotonous; but when the best steps from a region are put together, and the ground-patterns adapted to the theatre, the result can be enchanting. Unfortunately Pilar Lopez had much more ambitious ideas: she tried to produce a series of variations on regional themes, selecting and modifying steps in very odd ways and imposing ground-patterns from the theatre. This worked to some extent in *Castilla*, where she cleverly adapted an idea from Argentina's comic item *Lagarterana* to show two Castillian peasants glancing shyly at each other and performing very seriously some very peculiar toe-wiggling steps. But this was very exceptional: most of the items lacked the vitality of the real folk-dances and put nothing of value in its place. *Aragon* was particularly depressing, for the *jota* of this region can be highly effective in the theatre, and what we saw bore only the faintest resemblance to a *jota*.

The second half of the programme was much more satisfying, for this cuadro flamenco kept for the most part to traditional patterns of gypsy choreography. Nana Lorca looked far better in a *soleares* than she had done in various items in the first half, when she never seemed to know what to do with her face: once she was able to frown *à la flamenca* she looked at her ease, though she was still rather frail and tentative for this robust and violent gypsy style. Antonio Gades gave a splendidly dynamic performance in a *farruca*, though he was seriously cramped by having to dance on a small stage erected at the back of the theatre stage: he should have leaped down to the theatre stage when the dance began to warm up. He also suffered from the fact that he could not use some of the finest *farruca* steps which he had already performed in an item in the first half (*Danza del Chivato*), where they failed to make their proper effect because they were performed to orchestral music: Flamenco dancing without guitar music and/or flamenco singing is like *Swan-Lake* without Tchaikovsky.

The climax of the evening was something so wonderful as to make a visit to the show a "must" for anyone interested in Spanish dancing. This was the *soleares* of Eduardo Serrano (El Guito), the "baby bailaor" of the company. With his dusky gypsy face, flashing eyes and very Oriental style of dancing, he looked rather as one might have expected a Kathak danseur to look at the courts of the Mogul emperors of India. He divided the dance into three sections, each with its own steps and structure, and the three together made up a wonderful compos tion for which one should perhaps give as much credit to the teachers of this marvellous young artist as to El Guito himself. At first I thought he was concentrating too much on certain steps such as pirouettes or *taconeo* (heel-and-toe work) but soon I realized that there was an overall design, and in fact the dance moved through all the main rhythms and movements associated with a *soleares*, developing each of them very fully in an individual way. As the dance progressed Serrano became more and more inturned and ecstatic—it was almost as if he were being hypnotized by the spirit of flamenco—and by the end he was so much possessed by his *duende* (demon) that I believe he could have gone on improvising for hours. In the encores after the fall of the curtain he showed that he could also acquit himself well in the *por chuflas* (comic) aspects of flamenco ; and if he continues to develop there is no limit to the heights he may scale.

PILAR LOPEZ

SUSANA AND JOSÉ AT SADLER'S WELLS

Susana and José gave a week's season at the Sadler's Wells Theatre last October, and had a good enough reception from the Press and the public to make it possible for them to return after only seven months for a two-week season (commencing May 12th) presenting an enlarged repertoire with alternating programmes.

Resisting the prevailing tendency in Spanish companies towards larger numbers, they remain a pair of dancers, supported by a pianist, a guitarist and a Flamenco singer. Such a troupe conforms to the traditions of Spanish dancing, and has many advantages if the artists are good and the show is well arranged.

It is hard to guess what attracted Susana and José to Spanish dancing and the theatre, for they have few of the qualities one expects in either Spanish dancers or theatricals. Take Susana in a Flamenco *Alegrías*, performed in the traditional dress with a long trailing skirt. Such a dance demands in the performer a sparkling wit, a sense of the grotesque, passion, a capacity for making contact with the audience and responding instantaneously to its moods with creative improvisation, and a certain dangerous ferocity alternating with humour and warmth. Susana has none of these qualities: she works hard at performing the steps she has been taught, but continues to look highly respectable, so that she evokes Bournemouth or Boston rather than Seville. On the other hand she does not belong to the polished type of Spanish dancer who shines in *baile clásico español* and semi-classical Andalusian dances of the Sevillanas type: her feet do not point very well, her line is sometimes flabby, and her back lacks the suppleness needed for the *renversé* positions and which come into most types of Spanish dancing. In the same way José conforms to none of the ideal types of Spanish danseur : he is tall and moves rather ponderously; and though not quite as respectable as Susana he shows a roughness which is equally foreign to Spanish traditions. (The best Flamenco has a certain rough texture, but this is a highly stylized and sophisticated roughness, artistically akin to the quality one finds in the best Japanese tea-ceremony stoneware.)

What these two dancers do have is ideas—sometimes very good ones. Take the miniature ballet *Orpheus*, danced in Flamenco style to the rhythm of a seguiriya. The two dancers move around the stage performing the same steps, with Euridice following close behind Orpheus; finally he turns to look at her, and all is lost. But the climax goes for nothing, since it is staged with almost unbelievable ineptness: most of the lights go out *suddenly* (distracting one's attention from the dancers), Euridice walks quickly off-stage, and the curtain flops down almost before one realizes what is going on. *Encuentro Rítmico* represents an equally original and promising idea: the two dancers, moving in a pool of light on a dark stage, without any music, perform separate rhythms with their feet. To quote the programme, "Two different rhythmical themes meet each other, give rise to dramatical complications and unite into one unison." Splendid, this is clearly related to *jaleo*, the intricate cross-rhythms of *palmadas* (beaten palms), shouts and so on by which those not dancing encourage those who are, and offers great possibilities. In fact very few of these are realized: instead of performing real cross-rhythms, the dancers generally divide up the beats of single rhythms between the two pairs of feet, make very little use of *palmadas*, and never once snap their fingers. At the end, when they join in unison, the lighting expands—but the first extra spot to come on lights up a corner of the stage right away from the dancers, making one expect something new there which never arrives . . . With their new ideas Susana and José can make a real contribution to the development of Spanish dancing in the theatre, but only on condition that they learn to stage their ideas properly.

JOSÉ GRECO AND HIS SPANISH BALLET

With four Spanish companies appearing within a few weeks—and as many as three of them at the same time—Londoners have been enjoying rather more Spanish dancing that one would expect even in Madrid or Barcelona. The fourth company to appear, that of José Greco (at the Princes' Theatre following Pilar Lopez) is distinguished above all by the showmanship of its director. No one dance (and no one artist) stands out: there are no peaks of either badness or brilliance. José Greco has, in fact, concentrated on producing a gay and slick show in which item follows item without a break, and almost everything is taken at a brisk tempo.

Strangely enough (for a Spanish show) the most artistic aspect of the programme is the décor and lighting. The anonymous artist has provided a number of different sections which can be put together in various ways to suggest the courtyard of an inn, a pass in the mountains and various other settings—and each combination impresses by the poetic rhythms of its forms and the rightness of its colours as seen under stage lighting. (By skilful changes of lighting on the front of the stage and on the sky-cloth the same combination of scenic elements is made to look quite different for different items.)

The costumes are less fully satisfying. For one thing the designer is unable to resist José Greco's passion for skin-tight trousers of shiny satin, decorated with gold tassels, which make him look like a Spanish Liberace. All the girls wear very short full skirts of light material over billowing petticoats which fly up constantly to reveal the whole leg in a very un-Spanish manner; this is true even of *Maja de Cordoba*, in which Lola de Ronda impersonates a high-born Andalusian lady in a mantilla and a long white dress covered with black lace: she, too, keeps performing little spins to throw up the skirt, giving an effect half-way between Hollywood and the Folies Bergères. On the other hand one must be grateful that the legs made visible so constantly are well-shaped, and most of the girls are pretty, just as most of the men are handsome.

The item which aroused the most applause at the opening—it was, in fact, encored *twice*—was *El Cortijo*. This dance for four men is already well known in London, and in many ways it is typical of the work of José Greco, both as dancer and as choreographer. (It is no accident that a silhouette of Greco in this dance appears at the top of the article on him in the programme.) The dance is performed with Flamenco steps and arm movements, but it is a long way from Flamenco in style and atmosphere: the music comes from the orchestra instead of from the guitarists, and three of the men dance in unison, with Greco himself in a solo role. Steps and hand movements are chosen to suggest men riding horses, and the general effect is similar in many ways to the pony routine which is popular with groups of tap-dancers—though the style is harsh and virile rather than feminine.

For many years the company has been touring America, and it is obvious that Greco (who was born in Italy but grew up in America) has polished up his show in competition with rival American shows of the greatest possible slickness. As a dancer and choreographer he is unlikely to set either the Hudson or the Guadalquivir on fire, but he can give valuable lessons to the producers of other Spanish shows.

DANCE RECITAL BY SIGURD LEEDER STUDIO GROUP

"We have pleasure in announcing our first performance in the Emma Cons Hall, Morley College," read the invitation. "The pleasant auditorium and the large stage encourage us to persuade you not to miss this performance, which will give you the opportunity to view our work under ideal conditions."

In fact it was a great pleasure to see the dancers in the rebuilt theatre at Morley College, which has a long tradition of dancing. (Antony Tudor in particular worked here before the War). Sigurd Leeder is one of the world's foremost teachers of modern dance, attracting students from a good many countries, and the shows given by his studio group are always of interest.

But modern dance must by its very nature be original and in tune with the times: once it rests on its laurels it very soon loses its vitality: and the programme at Morley College disappointed by including no items of outstanding originality, comparable to the surrealist items of Jean Cebron and Eileen Cropley's *Rain Dance* which gave a lift to the best programmes of the studio group at Sigurd Leeder's old studio. In fact after half-a-dozen items I heard a woman on my left saying to her friend "It seems so old-fashioned—I saw it all in pre-War days." Nothing suggested that the dancers had seen any of the exciting novelties shown in London in recent years, such as the latest theatre pieces of Martha Graham, the musicals of Jerome Robbins, the mime-dramas of Marcel Marceau, the new ballets in Tudorian vein by the two Normans (Dixon and Morrice), or the Brecht company's performance of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*.

One partial exception was *In a Void*, which was performed in silence by Wendel Komter and belonged to a genre in which the great Swedish dancer Birgit Akesson worked for a number of years. Rather like Birgit Akesson's superb dance *Movement, In a Void* began with the dancer lying on her back, one leg high in the air. But it developed in a very conventional way, much of the time being no more than a series of classroom exercises. To say anything that matters in modern dance, the artist must develop a style and technique that belong essentially to his or her ideas, working almost like a modern sculptor. In fact modern dancers would do well to study what is happening in British sculpture, one of the few branches of the visual arts in which this country leads the world.

The most exciting member of the studio group at present is Eileen Cropley, who showed two compositions: *Beggar* (danced by June Kemp) and *Bird* (danced by herself). The former was clearly intended to be a Chinese beggar, and the steps showed an intelligent study of performances of "Pekin opera." But the execution of the steps lacked the crispness which they needed, and would certainly have been present if Eileen Cropley had been the dancer. She gave herself movements which were much less interesting in *Bird*, and crippled herself quite unnecessarily by appearing in all-over tights which did not suit her figure and in any case failed to stand out against the back-cloth, being of almost exactly the same shade of light blue.

Simone Michelle showed promise in her own composition *My Eyes Do Not See*, to music by Moussorgsky: her arms in particular were flexible and expressive.

The most successful of all the items was *Storm*, choreographed by Sigurd Leeder to sound-effects on tape, using the whole group. This gained a great deal from expanding on to the wide stage at Morley

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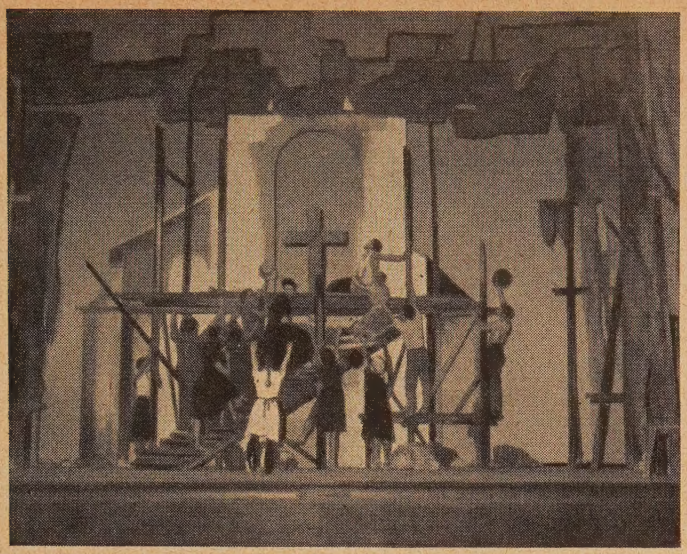

Hazaña. *Photo:* Sonja S. Weiss

The John Cranko ballet *La Reja*

BALLET RAMBERT SEASON AT SADLER'S WELLS

HAZAÑA

The London season of the Ballet Rambert opened auspiciously with the première of *Hazaña*, a new ballet by Norman Morrice, who is (with Norman Dixon and Clover Roope) one of a small band of promising young choreographers who are beginning to transform the face of British ballet. Very sensibly, Norman Morrice (who was born in Mexico) chose a Mexican theme and locale for his second ballet. (In the programme the action of *Hazaña* is described as taking place in a "South American" village on the eve of a local religious festival, but the strange religious masochism of the ballet is in fact characteristically Mexican—as is the custom of making great efforts with crosses.)

As one might expect from his first ballet *Two Brothers*, Norman Morrice once again chose a highly original theme and treated it in a correspondingly original way. On the face of it, the business of dragging a heavy cross up some scaffolding to the top of a church is a poor subject for a ballet, since it offers little opportunity for dancing: in fact, however, Norman Morrice achieved a satisfactory choreographic expression of the climax of the ballet by moving the villagers through dance-patterns which sometimes reflected, and sometimes contrasted with, the slow ascent of the cross. And the evocation of Mexico, with its mixture of placidity and passion, was remarkably convincing: what a treat to encounter, for once, choreography based on real knowledge, and vividly remembered observation and experience !

Though the ballet was quite short, the basic idea of a man carrying a cross up the side of a church when all the others gave up was insufficient on its own, and Norman Morrice had to invent a story leading up to this. Here he showed his inexperience: e.g. the relationship of the Priest to the Husband (who carried the cross) was obscure, and it was impossible to understand why the Priest carried the Daughter on to the stage at a late stage in the action. More serious was the fact that the actual erection of the cross was an anti-climax: after Herculean struggles up the scaffolding the Husband slipped the cross into its socket without much effort—and then the ballet ended abruptly, with all the emotions which had been aroused hanging in mid-air. To be truly Mexican, the ballet should perhaps have ended with the death of the Husband.

Whereas in *Two Brothers* Norman Morrice was hampered by the fact that his chosen music did not suit the mood, period or place of his ballet, he was enormously helped in *Hazaña* by the choice of modern music by Carlos Surinach which was right in atmosphere while avoiding obvious local colour. What was particularly satisfying about this music was that it used solo instruments such as cor anglais, harp, flute, piano and percussion in a way well suited to ballet. Norman Morrice fitted his story to the music very cleverly—at no point was there any obvious discrepancy between the two—but at the same time he was led astray by the structure of the music into building a choreographic structure which was incapable of supporting a fully satisfying treatment of his theme. The abruptness of the ending was a good example of this; equally disturbing was the fact that the emotions of the characters were never allowed to blossom forth into extended solos and pas de deux, and so we were never able to feel ourselves completely into them. It is a fallacy to think that an inexperienced young choreographer makes a good start by taking as the basis of his ballet strong existing music; if he has something positive to say (and is not content to use the theme of some existing dramatic music) he is

—Continued overleaf

SIGURD LEEDER—*Continued from page 6*

College, and patterns of group movement (as the dancers surged from side to side, apparently buffeted by the wind) were really expressive, even though the details of movement were kept very simple. The lighting, too, was excellent, with some fine use of silhouettes. Elsewhere in the show the lighting was generally lacking in atmosphere, and the movements of the two spots in the down-stage wings distracted attention from the dancing. The recorded orchestral music came over well, but the specially recorded piano music was scarcely audible; why not have a real piano?

THE YOUNG DANCER

During the National Education and Careers Exhibition at Olympia (organised by the National Union of Teachers) a number of schools gave programmes of dancing and dance-drama in the Exhibition Theatre. Unfortunately, I was able to see only a few of these—I particularly regretted missing the boys and girls from Woodberry Down Comprehensive School, produced by Alan Garrard—but I was able to see some displays of great interest.

One was *In the beginning*, presented by boys and girls from Ennersdale Junior Mixed School (London), and devised and produced by Len Fullford. This was first produced in 1954 at the annual production of the Lewisham Children's Theatre Guild, and showed evolution through the ages. The children were admirably costumed in tights and leotards, with splendid fantastic make-up rather in the Chinese manner, and they interpreted everything from plants to frogs with the greatest élan and aplomb. Len Fullford's choreography (evolved, if one dare used the word, with the collaboration of the children) was bold and imaginative, and the children executed it with satisfying precision: in contrast to other types of semi-improvised dance-drama, this had clearly been crystallised at some stage in development and then carefully rehearsed so that group movements intended to be in unison really were in unison. The music, composed and played by Len Fullford himself at the piano (with some assistance on percussion) gave excellent support in rhythm and atmosphere to the drama, which had great educational value as well as providing a fascinating spectacle.

Another excellent programme I saw was a dance programme presented by children from Manchester schools. They showed a very wide variety of dances—Swedish, Dutch, English, Scottish, Irish, Welsh, Italian, Israeli—and also an intriguing tri-lateral dance-drama entitled *Dreams*, in which three different dreams of the same person were shown. Almost inevitably, the nightmare and the grotesque dream were more interesting than the pleasant dream. It was satisfying to see children from secondary schools taking part along with those from primary schools: too many secondary school head teachers seem to think of dancing as something which belongs only to primary children.

almost bound to run up against insoluble problems. On the other hand a young choreographer stands to gain a great deal from the help of a composer with a flair for ballet, and this sort of collaboration is essential if the present renaissance in choreography is to continue.

Norman Morrice cast his ballet intelligently from the dancers at his disposal: John Chesworth acted with real intensity in the role of the Husband (which was largely mimed), Gillian Martlew was appropriately nervous and amorous as his Wife, and June Sandbrook did her best to bring to life the rather amorphous role of their Daughter. A stunning performance was given by Anna Truscott (late of the Split Ballet) in the small role of the Foreman's Wife: at one point she gave to every detail of movement a splendidly sullen eroticism combined with a precision of line and timing worthy of Maryon Lane. Here is a dancer to watch.

After Ralph Koltai's imaginative designs for *Two Brothers*, one expected something remarkable to give scenic life to the strange theme of *Hazaña*, and in fact Koltai's settting was a striking one, with a fantastic complexity of scaffolding which seemed cheerfully to ignore the problems involved in company touring. What I missed was colour: Mexican painters and architects have done wonders in this field, and hot colours would have enhanced the obstinate fury of the theme.

COPPELIA

The production of *Coppélia* with Lucette Aldous as Swanilda was an unforgettable experience. This dancer has a technique so accomplished that to her an exacting role like Swanilda is (to all appearances) no trouble at all, and she has a pair of feet as elegant as any to be seen on any stage in the world today. Her elevation is good, her pirouettes are fast and solidly balanced, and her *chainés* are exquisite. After making her entrance in Act 1 she danced with all the elegance and polish one could wish, and she gave almost every sign of being an ideal Swanilda. It was only in her humour that she seemed less than perfect: she did the mime correctly, but without any inner conviction or spontaneity.

As the Act went on I felt a growing conviction that the story had suffered a sea-change. Swanilda is supposed to be a light-hearted village maiden who is angry at the interest her fiancé shows in the doll Coppélia, and later impersonates the doll. But it looked more and more as if Coppélia, having fallen in love with Frantz, was impersonating Swanilda: her smile had the unchanging sweetness of a Dresden shepherdess, and her movements became more and more brittle and doll-like as the act went on.

I looked forward impatiently to Act II, for if Coppélia really had such ultra-romantic dynamism as to steal Swanilda's identity one might expect remarkable things from her in her own room. I was not disappointed: the doll dances had a quality of completely doll-like inhumanity I have only seen on one other occasion—when the Kabuki danseuse Tokuho Azuma danced the tragic role of Oshichi in puppet style, with a *tsukai* (manipulator) behind her to support her. With doll-dancing of this quality it is quite impossible to believe that the creature on the stage is of flesh and blood. What was particularly delightful about the Aldous-Coppélia was that it showed such variety, being wooden at first (when Dr. Coppelius transfers life to the limbs of the doll) and then developing fabulous verve and gaiety in the Spanish and Indian dances.

GILLIAN MARTLEW

Because of the company's weakness in experienced and talented soloists the Tudor programme relied heavily on Gillian Martlew's versatility—in fact she danced leading roles in all four of the Tudor ballets—and it was largely thanks to her that the programme made what impact it did. (I cannot bear to think what would happen if she had been off.) In lyrical and tragic roles, she inevitably suffers a good deal from not having been rehearsed by Tudor, and cannot bring out all the levels of meaning in each dance-image; but she gave a sound and highly intelligent performance both as The Woman in his Past in *Jardin aux Lilas* and in the Second Song of *Dark Elegies*. In two comic roles—the girl with the hoops in *The Judgment of Paris* and the ballerina from Milan in *Gala Performance*—she was superb, interpreting the roles quite as well as any of her predecessors (including the members of Tudor's own company) and bringing to them a number of excellent ideas of her own.

JARDIN AUX LILAS

Jardin aux Lilas (called in the programme *The Lilac Garden*) suffered from a performance of the heroine by Beryl Goldwyn which was both inadequate technically and wrong in style: she translated almost every arm gesture or leg movement into the nearest classroom equivalent. Moreover she failed to project Caroline's feelings out to the audience, so that even the magical moment when time stands still went for very little. With reasonably good acting from John Chesworth, Norman Morrice and the corps de ballet the production of *Jardin* made some impact because of the marvellous way it is constructed (with an intricate pattern of exits and entrances used for expressive purposes, almost like film cutting, in a way unique in ballet). But it still gave only a faint idea of the real thing.

DARK ELEGIES

Much the same could be said of *Dark Elegies*, where deep sincerity is not enough: it is also necessary to give the right quality to the movements, in the same way that it is necessary to speak lines of dramatic poetry with the right rhythms and inflections so that their full meaning emerges. One main fault in *Elegies* was that the dancers did not distinguish between the movements where weight should be stressed and those where the normal balletic denial of weight is required: the interplay between these two qualities of movement is vital to *Elegies*, for it is symbolic of the crushing effect of the death of the children and the successful attempt to master the emotions so that life can continue. The idea of using weight in this way was probably derived from modern dance, but Tudor exploited the idea in a very individual and classical way, and worked very hard to get his dancers to produce the qualities he wanted. It was dispiriting to see June Sandbrook (a young and promising soloist) performing the First Song in exactly the same way as last year, never giving to inward-pulling movements of arms the right impulses moving through the whole body, and performing them almost as if they belonged to *Giselle* when in fact they are post-modern-dance. Another general defect was the failure to integrate fast and complex foot-movements into the general texture of noble, tragic, extended movements: these foot-movements (which show influences from such things as Indian dancing, Kabuki and even tap) are very hard for classically trained dancers to assimilate, and when they are performed without complete understanding they look very odd . . . . . This ballet is a work of genius, and in spite of very severe defects in interpretation enough came across to win an ovation from the audience.

LA REJA

The main novelty of the second week was *La Reja*, a new ballet by John Cranko. This fell into the same category as the two ballets choreographed by Robert de Waren and Meriel Evans for the last Sunday Ballet Club show: that is to say, it was set in a historical period (the 18th century) and represented national dances (in this case Spanish) without showing any evidence of study of, or sympathy for, the actual dances of the period and place. One cannot say that John Cranko has been imitating his younger colleagues of the Royal Ballet; in fact the shoe is on the other foot, for Cranko has always taken this attitude to tradition, and it is likely that he has influenced them. (It is significant that when he devised " period " dances as part of the choreographic courses of the R.A.D. he used period music without paying much attention to period steps or patterns.)

In *La Reja* we find Cranko attempting without much imagination to combine what one might call " Bolshoi Spanish " (that is, the very phoney " Spanish " style which has been preserved in Russian ballet without any contact with the real thing) and a few clumsy imitations of the simplest Flamenco foot-rhythms, and setting the resultant mélange to harpsichord music by Scarlatti which is wildly unsuited to either parent style. Here we see a *reductio ad absurdum* of the " cocktail " or " gimmick " ballet which Diaghilev brought into existence in the twenties: it was based on the idea of giving spectators a new *frisson* by bringing together balletic elements (story, music, setting, costumes, choreography etc.) that had nothing whatever to do with each other. The result could not expect to have much artistic value, but when it was done with wit and good taste, under the guidance of an *animateur* of genius, it was mildly entertaining. Unfortunately all the possibilities of this sort of ballet were exhausted before Diaghilev's death, and Cranko's attempt to continue in this genre argues an almost incredible isolation from the world of today

The designer, Carl Toms, approached his task with very much the same attitude as the choreographer. The Aristocrats (who merely walked about the stage) wore long black cloaks and fanciful masks, and showed some study of the paintings of Velasquez and Goya. The male dancers wore breeches and belonged roughly to the Goya period. But the danseuses wore knee-length wide skirts in the fashion of yesterday, so that they created a clear impression of junior typists of to-day. Lucette Aldous and Gillian Martlew struggled very gamely to put life and meaning into their roles, but they were crippled equally by their costumes and the choreography.

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THE ROYAL BALLET AT COVENT GARDEN

RETURN OF MARGOT FONTEYN

On May 11 Margot Fonteyn, taking over Giselle at short notice in place of Anne Heaton (who was indisposed), made a welcome return to Covent Garden long before she was expected. After all the confusion and excitement of Panama, the occasion was a moving one both for the audience and for Fonteyn. According to some reports, she was astonished that her adventures in Panama should have become such a colossal news story—almost literally a nine-days wonder; but when I saw her make her entrance in Act 1, peforming the *ballottées* with all the exuberance and freshness that only she can give them, I felt that for once the world press showed a true instinct: here is a star of such transcendent quality that anything important which happens to her is of international importance.

Her dancing during most of Act I had a slightly veiled quality: it was as if she were reaching out to re-establish contact with the audience and not quite succeeding. (I am speaking here of a very subtle nuance: to anyone not familiar with Fonteyn's Giselle her performance would undoubtedly have seemed exemplary). Perhaps the reason for this veiled quality was the conducting of Kenneth Alwyn, who gave the music a tired, dragging, discontinuity that crippled even such a great artist as Fonteyn: she makes many of her finest effects by the way she interprets the music, and this music defied interpretation. Things should by rights have got even worse in Giselle's big solo after the Duke had gone into the house—for here Alwyn added an excessively slow tempo to dragging rhythms; but Margot Fonteyn reacted as only she can do to this appalling extra burden. Suddenly the veil disappeared as she maintained a slow turn in *attitude* for what seemed an impossible time, filling out the whole of the dragging music and making the movement sing out to the audience. From then on she danced with all her familiar warmth and power, making the mad scene particularly memorable with some subtle changes of emphasis: in her poignant suggestion of the memory of the necklace; in the wide movements with which she suggested her memory of the fall of the flower petals (making these symbolic of her own downfall); and in the anguish of her look as she first felt the terror of approaching death.

The question remains: given art of this supreme quality, why does not the Covent Garden management back it up with conducting of comparable quality, or at least very good of its kind? In fact we are faced year after year with conductors who are not even competent in a routine way—being the musical equivalent of dancers who cannot even put steps together convincingly.

SUSAN ALEXANDER IN GISELLE

The current policy of giving big chances to young soloists at Covent Garden has many merits: though the choice is not always an ideal one —and no account seems to be taken of the very wide difference in talent between an Antoinette Sibley or a Merle Park (who are of international calibre) and others of purely local interest—this policy brings on the young soloists at a great rate, and contrasts most happily with the previous policy of keeping them for a long time on the choreographic equivalent of a diet of chocolate creams.

Since her performance of Giselle in London just over a year ago Susan Alexander has been dancing it in Australia with the touring company, and it was therefore very interesting to see how she has developed her interpretation. Her acting was at times crude and naïve—she showed Giselle suffering from a heart attack with gasps so violent that they nearly knocked her over—but it erred in the right direction, and was impressively sincere and spontaneous: what she needs now is more experience, good production, and the careful study of other interpretations. Much the same could be said of her dancing: this showed excellent elevation, and was usually correct in line and accurately timed to the music. What it lacked was the magnetic quality by which a great dancer projects what she has to say out to the audience, and the inflections of rhythm which play a large part in making choreography expressive. In the mad dance, for example, she failed to bring out the staccato rhythms which show the disintegration of Giselle's mind, and she was at a disadvantage in Act II, where Giselle expresses her feelings almost entirely in dancing rather than in mime. But her achievements in Act I showed real promise, and she has staked a claim for other dramatic roles in the future.

So far as one could see, Christine Beckley was giving a strongly dramatic interpretation of the Queen of the Wilis; perhaping following the suggestions made by Karsavina in articles and mime-classes, she made her movements hard and forceful. This was by no means an ideal Queen of the Wilis—the dancing was really hard, without much *plié*, when in fact it should have created the *illusion* of hardness while retaining the academic virtues—but it was heading in the right direction. Unfortunately one could see very little of this because of John Sullivan's desperately bad lighting for Act II. He does not seem to have grasped the first principle of ballet lighting, which is to make the leading dancers clearly visible: all effects of atmosphere must be subordinate to this. When the Queen of the Wilis first appears, she can only be dimly seen because of the dark tone of blue in the arc illuminating her; later on the arc deserts her, so that she is scarcely seen at all. Albrecht, too, is forced to dance in obscurity—and so a large part of the choreography is reduced to nonsence. (The whole point of Act II is the dramatic interplay between Giselle, Albrecht and the Queen of the Wilis). In fact it is high time that the lighting plot for Act II was revised completely.

ANNETTE PAGE AS AURORA

It is easy to imagine the butterflies under the tutu of a dancer performing the title role of *The Sleeping Beauty* for the first time. What makes this role particularly onerous is that very soon after her first entrance Aurora is faced with a cruel test—the Rose Adage—in which the whole stress is on strength and balance rather than artistry, and there is no chance of covering up the slightest miscalculation. Annette Page got through this test reasonably well, though she looked very strained at the crucial points (when Aurora balances with her hands in the air), and responded to the challenge presented by the role by dancing far better than ever before. In most of her previous roles her dancing, though competent, suffered from a certain lack of precision in the timing: one could not say she was out of time, but her rhythms and phrasing were a trifle flaccid. Throughout *The Sleeping Beauty*, however, she made it clear that she had profited from intense and intelligent study of the performances of Margot Fonteyn: her timing was spot on, even in the big solo in Act I (where she reproduced Margot Fonteyn's tour de force of tying the beats of different parts of the body to the notes of various instruments). And her achievement was all the more creditable in being carried through in spite of appalling conducting from Emanuel Young, who missed the beat over and over again when he had to take his cue from her. The gallery booed him for this at the third interval: and quite rightly—for a 'prentice Aurora needs the most sensitive help from the conductor. (In fact the Royal Ballet would not admit even into the bottom of its corps de ballet a dancer whose standard of competence was equivalent to that of its conductors.)

I was very struck with Annette Page's hands, which showed a graceful and fluid line clearly inspired by that of Margot Fonteyn, and avoided the slight stiffness which disfigured them occasionally in the past. In fact all of her line maintained a good standard, except when her one serious physical disability—poor turn-out—made things difficult for her (e.g. in the *attitudes*). Her acting was good in Act I, but in the Vision Scene she was rather too sad and somnolent: here Aurora must be dreamy, but also seductive.

Though this Aurora had many fine qualities, and represented a major step forward in Annette Page's career, it lacked the very rare qualities of magic, poetry and originality which one hopes for in the great ballerina roles. The difference made by these qualities was very apparent in two solos: that of the Fairy of the Crystal Fountain (interpreted by Antoinette Sibley) and that of the female Blue Bird (interpreted by Merle Park). The former (as usual) transformed her dance creatively by her arm movements, the latter (as usual) by her rhythms and phrasing: clearly the Lilac Fairy was in a very good humour when she brought gifts to the cradles of these two fabulous artists.

Georgina Parkinson was well cast as the Lilac Fairy in the ballet, and gave the finest interpretation of this role since Beriosova: she imbued each movement with a fine, natural dignity, and even managed to cope with a tempo in her solo which was much too fast. Ronald Hynd, as Prince Florimund, showed all the presence and courtly assurance we have learned to expect from this remarkable artist.

REVIVAL OF LES RENDEZVOUS AT COVENT GARDEN

Les Rendezvous, the first ballet produced by Frederick Ashton for the Sadler's Wells Ballet, lies roughly midway (both in date of production and style) between *Façade* and *Les Patineurs*, and has some of the merits of these two ballets. It suffers, however, from the lack of the sense of direction which make these other ballets a loose unity: unlike them it does not have the gently satirical theme which brings out the best of Ashton's talents in this genre.

What it does have is one witty and rhythmic pas de trois, splendidly danced at Covent Garden by Merle Park, Graham Usher and Petrus Bosman. I find it hard to analyze why this dance succeeds so brilliantly when others around it, apparently in a very similar style, make only a faint impact. Perhaps Ashton happened to take a fancy to the tune and therefore succeeded in translating its nuances of rhythm and phrasing into line and movement with extraordinary deftness and sympathy: Auber's music bounces with a very engaging impudence, and so do the dancers.

William Chappell has made a good many variations in the girls' costumes in the twenty-six years since the original production, and

—Continued at foot of column, next page

— In France — by **JEAN COQUELLE**

t.v.

— In Britain — by **HELEN ROSS**

An interview with Juan Corelli well-known choreographer for French Television.

JUAN Corelli is a twenty-five-year-old Spaniard. He was a classical dancer at the Liceo Theatre in Barcelona until 1952, when he was the victim of an accident. While under treatment in England he resumed his ballet training, and then went to Paris, where he made a special study of the relationship between dancing and television. In France he is now considered as the creator of a new style of television dancing, thanks to his work for William Magnin (producer of children's programmes), for Maurice Blettery (producer of the series *Visages du Jazz*), and above all through his important work on the series *Musique pour Vous* produced by Lucienne Bernadac. Working on this series of programmes he created for Rosella Hightower and Vladimir Skouratoff *Concerto de Aranjuez*, with music by Joaquin Rodrigo; the eminent critic Emile Vuillermoz wrote of this programme that "Corelli has very well understood the essentials of the problem and has respected them very adroitly, while avoiding the danger of making his ballet too static." (*Paris-Presse*, January 1, 1959.) Next Juan Corelli put on the screen *Le Combat de Tancrède et Clorinde* with music by Claudio Monteverdi, danced by Colette Marchand and Vassili Sulich; this was hailed by Jean Cotte as a great success (*France-Soir*, January 8, 1959), and in response to demand from viewers it will be repeated next season. Later works for the screen have had equal success.

Jean Coquelle: *What do you think of ballet films?*

Corelli: Some of them I admire enormously, others I detest. I like *Bandwagon* and Martha Graham's film *A Dancer's World* because on these two occasions the choreographers and the directors forgot what stage dancing is like in order to create a purely filmic movement. I sincerely believe that all adaptation of stage choreography for the screen is a hybrid and condemned in advance. This is not only for reasons of sight-lines and images, but also for more subtle reasons—what one might call the "filmic spirit."

You have worked more for television than for the films. Is this because you think that the directness of television is more suited to the requirements of dancing than the indirectness of film technique?

Corelli: Dancing has no requirements. The subject, the dancer or the choreographer may show a tendency in one direction or the other—that is all. Personally, I like television with its directness: as a Spaniard I am attracted by the spontaneity characteristic of television, which gives to the dancer a much greater freedom and ease of expression.

How do you set about doing the choreography of a ballet under these conditions?

Corelli: When a certain amount of time is available, the director, the script-girl and I work together to make a camera script. We look in the music for opportunities to make cuts from camera to camera and so on . . . We almost put the choreography on paper; more exactly, we think out the images. In French television, however, there is usually a great shortage of time, and then I find myself doing all this work on my own, constructing my choreography on a technical scaffolding which I have established myself. I am very fond of certain effects: in a pas de deux, for example, I like to send the man behind the camera and make the girl continue as if the camera (i.e. the viewers) had taken the place of her partner. I think of television above all as a microscope: it is not enough to show the viewer beautiful images, one must also make him live them; if he is to live a story, he must enter into it.

As I see it, dancing is expressive movement in the raw state. This form of expression is strengthened by style—the "clothing of ideas"

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ROYAL BALLET (*Continued*)

the latest versions are fully as attractive as any of their predecessors; Merle Park's olive-green dress is particularly effective, the rather unusual tint having something of the impudent quality of the music and choreography. But the decor lacks all the atmosphere of the original Sadler's Wells setting, which suggested some sort of a park where people meet by accident or design: the new setting with its chandeliers might do for any divertissement at any gala performance, and has little relevance to the ballet.

FERNAU HALL

Tuesday, May 12th—B.B.C. Television—Stars of the Ballet

The set on which I viewed this programme was unfortunately giving a very poor reception, so I was unable to see any of the finer details. Judged as a whole it was an excellent programme. The dancers seemed to have plenty of space for their dancing and one had the same feeling of movement as if watching a stage performance. The credit for this must go to Naomi Capon who was responsible for the production. John Gilpin and Carla Fracci were the two stars who were introduced to us by Peggy van Praagh. Gilpin appeared to be in brilliant form and his pirouettes in his solo dance, the Cha-cha-cha (choreography by Paddy Stone) were quite remarkable for their control and speed. Carla Fracci has excellent elevation and made a good impression in her solo which was a Polka (choreography by John Cranko.) The programme ended with a moving performance of Fokine's *Spectre de la Rose.*

Sunday May 31st—A.T.V.—Sunday Night at the London Palladium.

Margot Fonteyn and David Blair appeared as guest artists in this programme. The announcement that they would do the Pas de Deux from Act II of *Sylphides* was an intriguing one. It turned out to be an excerpt from the one-act ballet *Les Sylphides.* The dancers were shown to great advantage against a delicately patterned dark back-cloth. The arrangement of the excerpt included the Mazurka, danced very well by David Blair, and a part of the Prelude danced by Margot Fonteyn. A change in musical phrasing in this last dance was refreshing, and it is a pity that Fonteyn does not include the Prelude in her stage performances. In the pas de deux which followed she danced quite superbly, and among several never-to-be-forgotten moments were a beautifully sustained arabesque and a slow rond de jambe into an arabesque with both arms stretching forwards; at the same time the head moved slowly back to finish in one of those unbelievably lovely pictures of line and curve which are a feature of Fonteyn's artistry. The camera and lighting of this programme were simple and excellent; possibly because it was shot on a stage with cameras in standard positions there were none of the clever-clever shots which so often spoil ballet on television. The production was by Bill Ward and the designs were by Tom Lingwood.

TV IN FRANCE (*Continued*)

which the film director Carl Dreyer often speaks about; and this style must be integrated with the content of the ballet, with its choreographic ideas. If one considers that the style of a film is the product of its rhythms, its compositions, the relationships between the tones of the surfaces, the interaction between light and shade, the controlled movement of the camera—these same qualities must form an essential part of screen choreography. Here we can see opening out a new field of choreography, which can help us to find new movement-values.

In any case I think that in television ballet everything has still to be learned, and I have been very lucky in having the opportunity—thanks to the producer Lucienne Bernadac—of making all sorts of experiments. I have also benefited from the help and sympathy of directors, chief-cameramen, set designers and costume designers.

Would you like to specialise exclusively in choreography for television and films?

Corelli: For the moment I should like to get this specialised work well in hand, and to do that I should like to work outside France—particularly in England. In principle, however, complete specialisation is an anachronism today. Can one say whether such men as Orson Welles, Elia Kazan, Ingmar Bergman or Luchino Visconti belong to the theatre or the cinema? I don't believe this can be done—and, as far as possible, I have to base my work on their example. As Eisenstein said, "everything worth doing has already been thought and done"; the creative artist working in the second half of the twentieth century must now crystallise all these experiments.

Theatre, cinema, television? Personally, I take an interest in everything which moves. In all the dialects, accents and languages of movement, that wonderful form of expression. I began with television simply because it is the youngest medium and the one which belongs most to our age.

Translator's Note: The script-girl has no exact equivalent in British television. The director punches up the cameras himself, and "la script" helps him by following the script so that he knows exactly where he is. In a ballet transmission she follows the score.

Originally choreographed in 1947, the ballet *Romance*, seen above, was lost in the fire, but has been revived again this last season. The dancer in the centre of the picture is Olivia Wyatt.

BALLET AROUND THE WORLD

CANADA

THE ROYAL WINNIPEG BALLET

WHENEVER the curtain rises on the Royal Winnipeg Ballet the company acknowledges a debt of gratitude to Gweneth Lloyd and Betty Farrally the two remarkable women who in 1938 founded the Winnipeg Ballet Club and two years later gave a first full evening's performance of ballet in that city. For it was out of this Club that the present Company emerged.

The first tour occurred in 1945 when the company was invited to appear in Ottawa, at that time the only ballet company to visit provinces in Western Canada. The next three years was spent touring eastern and western Canadian cities and pioneering ballet in many places where audiences had never seen it before. The first Canadian Ballet Festival was organised in Winnipeg by this energetic group, and later this Festival drew companies from Vancouver to Halifax.

Due to their success and the audiences they had built up during these years, the Winnipeg Ballet was incorporated in 1949, and a Board of Directors took over the financial management. This made it the first professional company in Canada.

In 1951, during the visit of Her Majesty the Queen (then Princess Elizabeth), and the Duke of Edinburgh, the company gave a command performance, and permission was given to use the word "Royal." The company thus became the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the first "Royal" company in the British Commonwealth.

Between 1953-54 the company was hitting its stride, with over 40 ballets in the repertoire, about 32 of the ballets choreographed by the artistic director, Gweneth Lloyd. With the usual eastern and western tours (the Royal Winnipeg Ballet being the first Canadian Company to tour completely across Canada from Victoria to Halifax) it had another first again, that of breaking into the United States under the Columbia Concerts Management. It had a very successful tour visiting 28 cities, including Washington and the Opera House in Chicago. In Washington Alicia Markova appeared again with the company as guest artist (she had appeared with them in Winnipeg the previous year).

In June their season ended in disaster for a fire destroyed everything. All the costumes, music, choreography were lost. For one whole season there was quiet on the R.W.B. front, and dancers had to find employment elsewhere.

Now the company is back on its feet again. In 1957 the Canadian Council granted $20,000 and for the season 1958, $25,000 with an additional grant of $7,600. The company raised needed money from donations and memberships. Dancing personnel consisted of 17 dancers, 10 girls and 7 boys, and for the 1959-60 season will be increased. Director Spohr would eventually like 24. He says more than 24 would take away the individual personality of the company, and it is just the right number to transport.

This last season Arnold Spohr returned to the company as its director. He was with the company since 1945, as a leading dancer and choreographer, and has a sound background for this position, first being a school teacher, a pianist with an A.T.C.M. degree, an R.A.D. graduate, Advanced (Honours) and Solo Seal, as well as vast experience in the Theatre.

Critics write enthusiastically about the Company with headlines: "Director is Unseen Hero of Ballet's Opening Performance," "Brilliant Revival Seen for Ballet under Spohr," continuing " we can give only the highest praise to this gallant company, which at the height of achievement, lost all its effects in a fire in 1954, it is again a force to be reckoned with in the world of ballet. The company is young and enthusiastic, highly disciplined under inspired direction. It has been clearly demonstrated that Canadian ballet is equal to and, in the view of many critics, superior to the best the U.S.A. can offer. Certainly the R.W.B. can stand comparison with all but the world's top companies."

Dancers of the Company have to learn a special R.W.B. syllabus set up by Spohr. This unifies all the different styles of the dancers trained by other teachers.

The 1958-59 season has been a most active one with nine ballets learned within six months. Choreographers taking part were Gweneth Lloyd, Ruthanna Boris, Robert Moulton, Brian Macdonald, Heino Heiden and Arnold Spohr.

The R.W.B. achieved its success with a diversified programme—a ballet for every taste.

Its aim is to bring vital ballets progressive with the times. The programme usually starts with a classic, followed by a dramatic or abstract work, classical excerpts and finishing with a comedy.

COMMAND PERFORMANCE, 1951

The visit of Her Majesty the Queen (then Princess Elizabeth) and the Duke of Edinburgh was a momentous occasion in the history of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet.

One of the ballets performed for the Queen was Arnold Spohr's *Ballet Premier*. This was filmed and included in "The Royal Journey" issued by the National Film Board. *Photos:* Campbell and Chipman

The nine ballets learned this season included five revivals.

1. **ROMANCE**—a romantic ballet danced in the traditional style. Music by Glazounov, setting by W. J. Phillips, costumes by Constance Officer. Choreography by Gweneth Lloyd.

2. **FINISHING SCHOOL**—this ballet takes place in a fashionable girls' school in 1870. A rebellious new girl is admitted and upsets the entire school with her mischievous pranks. Music by Strauss. Setting by John A. Russell. Costumes: Dorothy Phillips. Choreography: Gweneth Lloyd.

3. **LE JAZZ HOT**—A nostalgic glance at the Roaring Twenties, a review of the dances, styles and music, as they might have been in a vaudeville act of that time. Music—popular tunes of the 20's arranged by Paul Kueter, orchestrated by Robert Drumm. Choreography: Ruthanna Boris.

4. **THE COMEDIANS**—Though expressed in contemporary terms, the form of the work hearkens back to the style of Commedia del Arte; the travelling players who improvised upon themes of everyday life in all their performances. (Originally composed upon commission by the New York City Ballet.) Music: Kabelevsky. Costumes: Alvin Colt. Choreography: Ruthanna Boris.

5. **PASTICCIO**—Pasticcio is an Italian word meaning "stew." The basic ingredient must be meat, from there on the cook is free to add ingredients as he pleases. The basic ingredient of the ballet is the thought of love; one who loves, one who is loved, and their circumstance. The music is the work of the contemporary master, Vittorio Rieti, with setting by John A. Russell and John Graham. *Pasticcio* was commissioned by the Junior League of Winnipeg for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet of Canada, and received its world première in the city of Winnipeg, 1956.

The four new ballets are:—

GRASSLANDS—This ballet is concerned primarily with the joys and hardships of farm life on the great plains. 1. Quilting Bee. 2. Saturday Night. 3. Drought. The costumes and set are designed by Robert Moulton and the ballet is set to music by Virgil Thompson. Choreography: Robert Moulton.

THE DARKLING—The setting and costumes for this ballet are designed by Peter Symcox, set to music by Benjamin Britten. "We bring to every love-relationship our total selves, all the pure, capricious, evil, or inhibited elements of our characters." At the end "the metamorphosis of the darkling is complete; she has moved from shadow into light." Choreography: Brian Macdonald.

THE CHINESE NIGHTINGALE—Hans Christian Anderson's moving and beautiful fairytale of the Emperor and the nightingale with the enchanting song, comes to life in a two act ballet, set to music by Werner Egk. Choreography: Heino Heiden.

E MINOR—An interpretation in free classical style to music by Chopin. The setting is by John Hirsch and the costumes are designed by Grant Marshall. Choreography: Arnold Spohr.

Sonia Taverner and Fredric Strobel

Richard Rutherford

Marina Katronis and Fredric Strobel

Marilyn Young

All photos by Campbell and Chipman.

Dancers of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet for this season are:—

MARILYN YOUNG—Her first performance with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet was at the age of ten. Miss Young has had all her training with this company, studying first at the Canadian School of Ballet under Betty Farrally, and later working on a scholarship at the Banff School of Fine Arts with Gweneth Lloyd. In addition to touring with the company, she has appeared in Vancouver's "Theatre Under the Stars," on Winnipeg's "Rainbow Stage," and on national and local television.

Miss Young has appeared in light comedy and in classical ballet. Her solo roles include the pas de deux from *Nutcracker*, *Aurora*, and she has done wonderful comedy work in *Le Jazz Hot*, and fine dramatic work in *Grasslands* and *The Darkling*.

MARINA KATRONIS—Born in Lethbridge, she moved to Vancouver when she was only three months old. A dancer since the age of four, Miss Katronis worked with Vancouver's "Theatre under the Stars" for six years, doing such shows as *Carousel*, *Wizard of Oz* and *Song of Norway*. She danced in festivals with a Vancouver amateur group and won a scholarship to the Banff School of Fine Arts.

Since she first appeared with the R. W. B. at the age of fifteen (she was the first non-Winnipeg girl to join the company) she has appeared in her favourite roles in *Masquerade* and *Don Quixote*. Katronis is a very versatile dancer.

SONIA TAVERNER—Born in England, Miss Taverner came to the Royal Winnipeg Ballet in 1956 seeking the opportunity it could give for intensified individual development. Canadian and American audiences have seen her on television as well as on the stage. Offstage reserved and unassuming, her fiery brilliance when dancing has captivated Winnipeg audiences in such roles as the *Black Swan* pas de deux, *Aurora*, and *Don Quixote* pas de deux.

FREDRIC STROBEL—This young Chicago-born dancer came to the Royal Winnipeg Ballet last year and has been seen to great advantage in several leading classic roles, notably the pas de deux from *Black Swan*, *Aurora*, and *Don Quixote*. To these roles he brings an elegant classical line developed in study with Bernice Holmes in Chicago, and the School of American Ballet in New York. Although his musical training started with the piano, he later became completely absorbed in ballet. However, his abilities at the piano stood him in good stead, as he later played the piano at a dance school to finance his lessons. A more prosaic job in a grocery store also helped to pay for further study.

FREDERIC KONRAD—This versatile and promising young dancer began his studies in his native Milwaukee at the age of ten. He studied in New York, chiefly with the School of American Ballet, and also at the Ballet Theatre and Ballet Russe Schools. His dancing career with concert and stock companies has taken him all over the mid-west and even as far afield as Cuba. He has also been a "straight" actor in the Southern United States.

BEVERLEY BARKLEY is another young dancer who came to the R.W.B. from Vancouver, and is in her fifth season with the Company. A pupil of Mara McBirney and of Betty Farrally, she has appeared in two Canadian Ballet Festivals, and has danced for several seasons with "Theatre Under the Stars." She also spent the summer of 1957 taking advantage of a scholarship to study at the Royal Ballet School, London.

TED PATTERSON is a fine character dancer and started his career in the Community Theatre in Edmonton, where he acted, made scenery and costumes, and generally made himself familiar with every aspect of the theatre world. He began his dance training with Laina Mets Kreig in Edmonton, later studied with Betty Farrally and Gweneth Lloyd, and has shown repeatedly in his interpretation of roles that his dramatic training has added a great deal to his talents for dancing. His roles include *Pasticcio*, *Le Jazz Hot* and *Finishing School*.

RACHEL BROWNE was born in Philadelphia and began her ballet training at the Philadelphia Ballet Guild, and later in New York with Robert Joffrey, and the School of American Ballet. A serious student of music for many years Miss Browne confined her studies mainly to the piano, but also played the French horn in the Orchestra when she attended high school in Philadelphia.

OLIVIA WYATT in private life the wife of Brian Macdonald, one of this season's choreographers, and with her husband, directed and choreographed the recent hit *My Fur Lady*. Miss Wyatt took her early training in Toronto and at the Ballet Arts School in New York. She also danced with the National Ballet for two years. She has studied under such eminent teachers as Celia Franca and Betty Oliphant.

RICHARD RUTHERFORD possesses a splendid physique for classical work. But due to his sense of humour manages comedy with ease. He went to New York from Georgia at the age of 19, studied at the Ballet Theatre School, and with Robert Joffrey. During this time, he alternated his gruelling practice work with jobs in a film laboratory and a bank to pay for his training.

JAMES CLOUSER started his musical training at the Eastman School, where he won the Composition Prize upon graduation. He has composed music and choreographed ballet for presentation in the Carnegie Recital Hall. Mr. Clouser began his dance studies while at the Eastman School, and continued his training in New York at the Ballet Theatre School, and then joined their Company. He has also danced in Summer Stock in Boston with Leon Danilian, and worked in the Winnipeg Summer Theatre.

MICHAEL HRUSHOWY, a tall rugged looking young dancer, is good in dramatic roles. Born in Sioux Lookout, he began his dancing career with Willy Blok Hansen in Toronto and later joined his company. Mr. Hrushowy then went to Vancouver on a Lennie Gibson scholarship to study primitive and ballet dancing, and later took his Royal Academy training with Mara McBirney.

Sheila Mackinnon, Elizabeth Wullen, Kit Copping, David Holmes, and Naomi Kimura, completed the Company.

With Brian Macdonald as the choreographer, the company is now busy with a 13 weeks TV series entitled "Dancing Story Book."

Grasslands The Quilting Bee

BACK

DR. JULIAN BRAUNSWEG, Director of London's Festival Ballet returned to this country during June to make final preparations for the commencement of the Company's Tenth Anniversary Season at the Royal Festival Hall. In the past Dr. Braunsweg has been the recipient of many emblems presented to him in various cities in honour of his Company's appearances there, and this time he has returned with yet another, a gold medallion presented to him by the Director of the Liceo Theatre in Barcelona after Festival Ballet had given twenty-four performances and played to a record-breaking audience of 70,000 people.

With the première of Noel Coward's new ballet *London Morning* on opening night (subsequently to be televised as reported elsewhere in this issue)—the production of another new ballet *Vision of Chopin* (with music by Chopin, choreography by David Lichine) later in the season, the augmenting of the Company with such stars as Toni Lander, Carla Fracci ballerina from La Scala Milan, and our own Alicia Markova, Dr. Braunsweg is certainly setting the scene for the most exciting season yet.

Following the London summer season the Company will go to Ireland for the Dublin International Theatre Festival, and in October commence another European tour.

★

ALICIA MARKOVA (*left*) seen arriving by B.O.A.C. Comet after four months in the United States. Before leaving America Markova was asked to represent the dance at the "ground breaking ceremony" performed by President Eisenhower on the site of the new Lincoln Centre in New York which will be the headquarters of the Arts.

Markova's first public engagement in Britain was a luncheon at the Dorchester Hotel on Tuesday, June 9th when she was Guest of Honour at the Variety Club of Great Britain. The beautifully inscribed cake presented to her on this occasion was taken by Markova to the Arts Educational School at Tring, where, needless to say, it was greatly appreciated by the children. On June 13th Markova introduced and compèred the B.B.C. Light Music Festival Programme of Ballet and Opera Music at the Royal Festival Hall. She will be guest artist there with Festival Ballet during their forthcoming London Season.

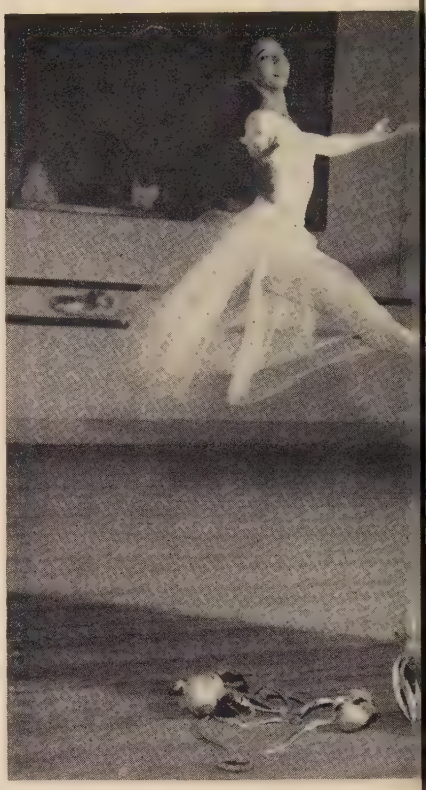
★

MARGOT FONTEYN (left) visiting the Ballet school in Warsaw during her engagement with the Polish National Ballet, with whom she danced *Swan Lake*, partnered by Michael Somes.

★

MAURICE BÉJART'S Ballet Theatre (right) commence a London season at Sadler's Wells Theatre on July 13th. Our picture shows the ballet *Orphée* which will be given its British première on the opening night.

The Company was formed in 1954, and Maurice Béjart was the first choreographer to use Concrete Music. During their season in London the Company will include *Symphonie pour un homme seul*, *La Mer*, *Équilbre* and *La Voix* in their repertoire. At the moment they are touring in Spain.



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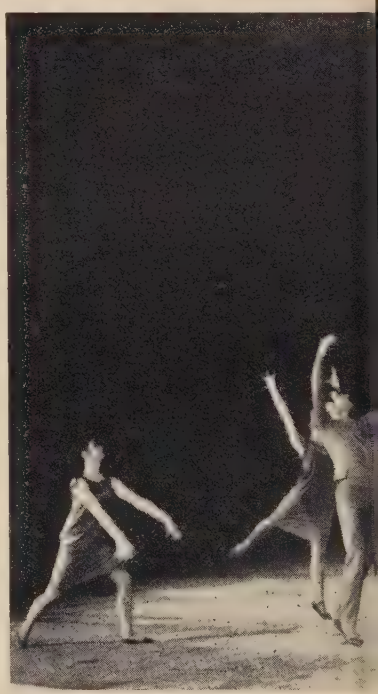
Maurice Béjart, as Orp



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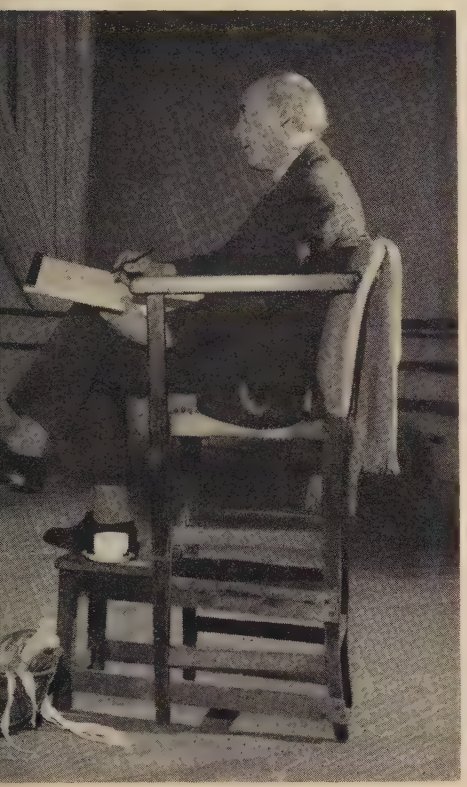


the famous leap from *La Sylphide* for Ballet Festival stamp issued on May 16th 1st stamp)

n the air above the dancers.

DEIRDRE DIXON, wife of Michael Somes, died in London at the age of 25 on Wednesday, May 27th. The cause of death was meningitis. A requiem Mass held on Monday, June 1st at the Holy Redeemer Church in Exmouth Market, London, E.C.1 was followed by cremation at Golders Green.

Miss Dixon, who had recently made great progress in her career, was regarded as one of our most promising young dancers. On March 10th she was given a principal role in Frederick Ashton's *La Valse* and danced before the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret at the Gala Performance at Covent Garden.

Other roles danced by Miss Dixon during her career with the Royal Ballet were:

The Turquoise girl in *Agon.*

The leading Wili in *Giselle.*

The Fairy of the Golden Vine in *Sleeping Beauty.*

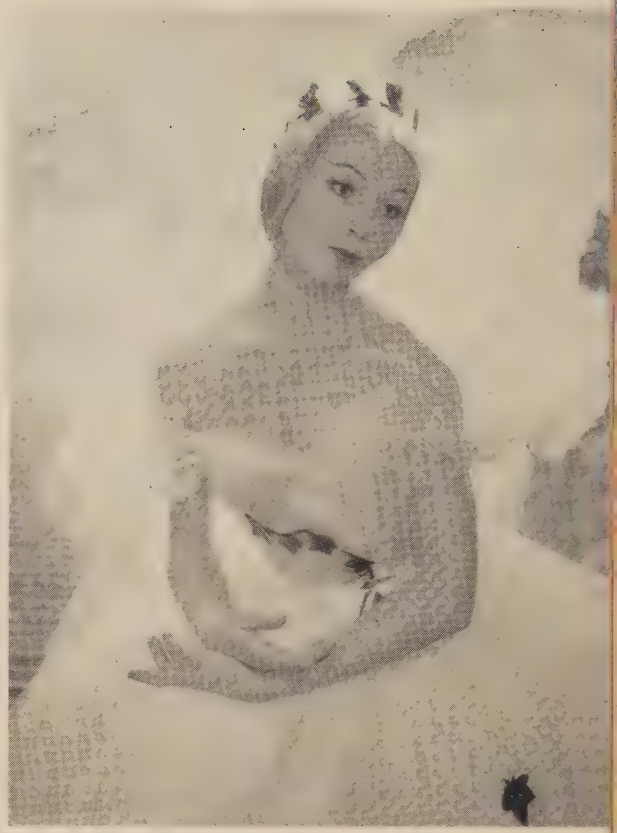
Pas de six, leading swan, and The Spanish Dance (in Act III) in *Swan Lake.*

A nursemaid in *Petrouchka.*

Red Girl in *Les Patineurs.*

A nymph of Pan in *Daphnis and Chloe.*

Ballabile (Impressions of Spain).



Deirdre Dixon in *Giselle*
Photo by Paul Tanqueray

Belinda Wright
Photo by Gianfranco Moroldo

BELINDA WRIGHT is to head a company of 34 dancers who will dance at the Basle Festival this year. The festival lasts from July 9th to 12th, but the première of the show takes place on July 1st and ten performances are planned. They are to be held in a huge tent with a seating capacity of 7,000. Belinda's husband, Wolfgang Brunner, has been asked to devise and write a musical based on rhythm, colour and movement in modern style, entitled *Es Lebe Das Leben* with music by Hans Vogt, and consists of a prologue, four tableaux and a grand finale. This is the first year that professional dancers have been engaged, in the past there has been a Festival play besides the usual athletic competitions, but these have been performed mainly by amateurs and athletes. The Festival authorities say that they realise that television has brought a large audience into contact with music and dance of an international type, and that live theatre and especially popular festivals must use this type of entertainment. Miss Wright's partner will be Jelko Yuresha, a young dancer from Jugoslavia, and the Company of 19 girls and 15 men will include Sheila Browning, Anne Edgar, Graham Smith, Ivor Meggido and Larry Haider as soloists.

Miss Wright was a great favourite with British and foreign audiences during the time she was ballerina with London's Festival Ballet. Our photograph (right) was taken in the Piazza del Duono, Milan whilst Miss Wright was still dancing with the Company, she resigned later, just before the birth of her son.

Gary Burne *Photo:* Barrington-Martin

In the *Don Quixote* pas de deux *Photo:* Houston Rogers

CAREERS IN PICTURES

GARY BURNE

OF THE ROYAL BALLET

At the age of four, taken in Umtali, Southern Rhodesia.

GARY BURNE was born in Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia, as Algernon Hayes-Hill. At the age of seven, unknown to his parents, he was smuggled in to ballet classes by his grandmother, but when he passed his first R.A.D. examination with honours after studying for a year, his secret was revealed.

At the age of sixteen, having studied ballet, with Elaine Archibald, and passing further examinations with honours, he was noticed by Anton Dolin who advised him to try his luck in England.

On arrival in London he studied with Ruth French, and was later auditioned for the Royal Ballet School, accepted, and two months later joined the company.

After three years in the corps de ballet he emerged as a solo dancer, creating the role of the King of the South in Cranko's *Prince of the Pagodas*. In this powerful and diabolical native dance he created an impression that marked him for a brilliant future.

He was made a senior soloist in 1957 and has since danced many of the leading male roles in the Royal Ballet's repertoire.

As Franz in *Coppelia*, Burne dances with an exciting exuberance and spontaneous gaiety, having obviously given, as he does to all his roles, a great deal of intelligent thought to his characterisation. In his interpretation of the role of Satan in de Valois' *Job* he has been acclaimed by critics as a worthy successor to Anton Dolin in his famous portrayal of that role.

This year, in the April programme of the Sunday Ballet Club, Burne created another role, that of The Son in Norman Dixon's ballet *The Cord* and gave a performance conceived with a new psychological awareness that showed a deepening of his interpretive powers. In a previous programme of the Club Burne created a choreographic experiment entitled *Quatre en Rouge*.

While with the Royal Ballet on tour Burne has danced in America, Canada, Germany, France, Holland, Spain, and Italy, and appeared many times on Television in both London and New York. At the moment he is on tour in his native country partnering Merle Park, a

n *The Shadow* pas de trois *Photo:* Denis de Marney

With Antoinette Sibley in *The Cord* *Photo:* John French

fellow Rhodesian, in a recital programme which includes a new pas de deux especially choreographed for them by John Cranko, and a Cha-Cha-Cha by John Gilpin.

Teachers: Elaine Archibald, Ruth French, Ailne Phillips, Royal Ballet School, and Errol Addison, to whom Burne says he owes a great deal for he has given him tremendous confidence.

Hobbies: Painting, Record-collecting, Swimming, Shooting.

Dancing the mambo with Doreen Wells at Sol Hurok's party for the Royal Ballet on opening night in New York. *Photo:* Louis Mélancon

As the King of the South in *The Prince of the Pagodas*
Photo: Houston Rogers

The native orchestra which often accompanies the dancers, showing the timbili (or native xylophones).

The dance of the young men (AMAKWENKE) of the Xosa tribe.

Photos published by kind permission of the Transvaal and Orange Free State Chamber of Mines, Johannesburg.

INTER-TRIBAL DANCES
IN THE GOLD MINES OF SOUTH AFRICA

by Mary Kenwood

Ballet Today Correspondent in Johannesburg

Sunday morning in Johannesburg. In the heart of the clean, bright city the hum and throb of everyday living is stilled, and the deep canyons between the tall modern buildings are deserted but for occasional small groups of native musicians strumming out the catchy "Kwela" as they walk.

Here all is quiet, but out beyond the perimeter of the city, at the gold mine where today's Inter-Tribal Dance is to be held, all is activity as hundreds of natives excitedly prepare for the highlight of their week.

Throughout the year, each Sunday morning almost without exception, at one of the mines around Johannesburg on the Reef of White Waters, the natives' equivalent of our Ballet Theatre is held, and white people are welcomed on the understanding that this is primarily for the recreation and entertainment of the African mine workers. This labour is drawn from all over Southern Africa as far north as Tanganyika, and fascinating indeed are the many and varied tribal dances performed by the different teams.

From the big hotels and from private homes in the beautiful suburbs of Johannesburg, visitors to the city converge on the mine, from which, as they approach, they can already hear the distant sound of drums. In the mine compound the natives taking part are practising and warming up for their entry into the arena. There is great competition not only between the different tribes, but also for the honour of appearing on each team.

The arena is usually a circular bowl, with a flat, beaten earth floor surrounded by tiers of seats. Two uniformed natives are on duty to persuade each team in turn to make its reluctant exit and allow the next one to take its place. This is often difficult, as once started, many of the dancers seem quite prepared to go on indefinitely.

Although the display is usually scheduled to commence at about 9.30, there are almost always performers already on the floor as the first white spectators arrive.

First come the Zulus. Wearing coloured skirts, bead necklaces and calf-hide aprons they dance to the accompaniment of their own singers and drummers and the clapping of hands. Their rhythmic high stamping dance rises to a climax and concludes when they all fall to the ground.

The British Basutos appear in westernised dark trousers and boots. They accompany their slow, wide, striding movements and graceful hand gestures with singing and a peculiar hissing noise.

Next are the young men (Amakwenkwe) of the Xosa tribe of the Eastern Cape. With rattles strapped to their legs and batteries of bells round their chests and arms they perform the shaking dance which, in their native villages, takes place before their initiation. This is one of the highlights of the morning, as, in double file, they obey the whistled instructions, and after retreating a few paces, commence the incredibly fast, fluid rippling of chest muscles accompanied by simultaneous jigging on alternate feet, known as *Kuteya.*

Perhaps, to visitors, the most astonishing and unexpected of all the tribal dances is that of the Baca Gumboot Dancers. As the two lines of trousered and gumbooted dancers file in and begin their exciting step dance, slapping their boots and clapping their heels together in unison with the speed and precision of a West End chorus, there is invariably a storm of delighted applause from the audience. This fascinating variation on the more usual tribal dances is said to have evolved from the issue of Wellingtons to dock labourers in Durban for use in the off-loading of certain cargoes. They have made the Gumboot Dance part of their tradition.

Now the Shangaans from Mozambique take the stage. First come the members of the percussion orchestra of drums and home-made xylophones, followed by the dancers dressed in waist fringes, skirts of animal skins cut to a tail-like point at the back, and red and green feathered head-dresses. Their snake dance was originally performed with live snakes.

From the white spectator's point of view, the Stick dance of the natives from Tanganyika is undoubtedly one of the most interesting. Their first appearance usually arouses mirth, as they wear spotless white shirts and extremely long wide khaki shorts—a costume influenced by past army service. Said to be originally based on a ceremonial crocodile hunt in canoes, with the tribal chiefs in the bows using spears, this dance, performed with thrusting arm movements, much grunting, rolling of eyes and humorous grimacing, is always popular with the audience.

African natives are, on the whole, extremely sunny and happy people, with a highly developed sense of humour. It is seldom, at a Mine Dance, that there is not one really good comic who performs out in front of the rest, and has the enormous native audience howling with glee.

From the mouth of the Limpopo comes another branch of the Shangaan tribe which performs a humorous, acrobatic dance which is another favourite with the natives.

And so the long morning continues, with sometimes as many as 20 or so different teams performing. There, under the hot African sun, the dust rises under the feet of the dancers as mid-day approaches, and suddenly the morning is gone, and the native orchestra is playing its own versions of "Die Stem" and "The Queen."

Long after the visitors have left the compound, the natives will be carrying on for their own amusement, and under the golden mine dumps the sound of drums will continue for most of the day. But for the white audience the show is over.

REPORT FROM *Johannesburg*

THE revival of Frank Staff's ballet *Czernyana* in London coincides with news of the Frank Staff Ballet Company in Johannesburg.

On April 25th the company commenced a tour of Reef towns including Rustenburg, Vereeniging, Krugersdorp, Potchefstroom, Nigel, Randfontein, Springs and Roodepoort. They will later go to the Northern Transvaal.

During this tour the company will perform six ballets of Frank Staff's, all of which are completely new with the exception of *L'Atelier de Monsieur X* (based on paintings by Degas), which has already been seen in Johannesburg. Costumes for all these ballets have been designed by Jacqueline St. Clere (Mrs. Frank Staff), who will also appear with the company in Springs.

Details of the new works are as follows: *Toccata and Fugue*, with music by Bach and decor by Saxon Lucas; *Jamaican Rumba*—music by Arthur Benjamin; *Swan of Tuonela*—music by Sibelius; *Romantic Encounter*—music by Chopin: *The Legend of Frankie and Johnnie*—music by William Hill Bowen and decor by Pamela Lewis; and *L'Atelier de Monsieur X* to music by Prokofiev.

Included in the company for the tour, apart from Frank Staff himself, are Dries Reyneke, Victoria Carlson, Rosemary Harvey, Joan Rochelle, Adele Samuels, Rosalynd Kaye, Arlene Swift and Leon Pomeranetz.

During a recent tour of Cape Town, Kimberley and East London, the company had great success with another new ballet by Frank Staff. This was *Lizzie Borden* to the music of Morton Gould's "Fall River Legend." The South African dancer, Rosemary Harvey, who received part of her training in England, scored a personal triumph in the leading role.

The Frank Staff Ballet Company now has a repertoire of thirteen ballets altogether, and it is most unfortunate that the difficulty of obtaining a theatre is preventing balletomanes in Johannesburg from seeing these new works.

Bookings opened for the Antonio season at the end of May, although the Company does not arrive here until July. There has been a great upsurge of interest in Spanish dancing here recently, consequently there was a rush for seats.

The Cape Town University Ballet Company are to produce the full length *Casse Noisette* at the opening of their season in Cape Town in December, and the principal dancers will be Patricia Miller and David Poole, both ex-Royal Ballet dancers. I shall write more fully about this Company in a later issue.

CONTINUING HOPE SHERIDAN'S REVIEW OF

The Bolshoi Season in New York

GISELLE

THE apex of the Bolshoi season is the company's production of *Giselle* and, difficult as it may be to believe, the Bolshoi has two first class Giselle's in Galina Ulanova and Raissa Struchkova.

As for the production itself, there are very many instances in which much thought and performance have clarified the action. The woodland glade is leafy and thoroughly Romantic. Everywhere, besides the décor, there are little touches of realism. Hilarion enters with the gift of a partridge for Giselle. His attitude toward her, even "in absentia" makes it clear that she has been the recipient of his attentions previously. In another spot, Hilarion's suspicions of Count Albrecht (or Albert as the libretto reads) are first aroused not by his unfamiliarity but by his manner of authority. Albrecht acts as if he expects to be obeyed. Hilarion as a ducal woodsman or Gamekeeper has seen that air before even if he has not seen the face. His look of curiousity at Albrecht's peasant costume is a look of eloquence. Giselle's mother is acted with restraint and expression. How nice to find a middle-aged woman on stage playing a middle-aged woman! We note also Albrecht's panic upon hearing the ducal hunting horn in the distance. This is repeated by Albrecht's squire who enters nervously before the hunting party.

The gift of the necklace by Bathilde is taken out of the realm of sheer fantasy by having Bathilde offer it as an engagement present—an act of happiness because she, too is engaged. It also transforms the necklace into a chain of irony binding both women who are betrothed to the same man.

Hilarion's dance with his friends points to the fact that he is a social human being with a distinct peasant society around him—albeit lower than that of Giselle. The Peasant Pas de Deux restores a balance to Act I; Albrecht and Giselle are the lovers, not the chief dancers of Act I.

Albrecht is surprised to see the Duke but not alarmed. Men can explain philandering to men. He is shocked only when Bathilde appears. (The Bolshoi carefully observes even so delicate a nuance in the society of those times). He tries to explain his costume by airily saying that he is strolling in the woods, with no attempt at honest explanation. He turns away from Giselle when she approaches him. Hilarion again demonstrates down-to-earth behaviour and his good intentions even in times of stress as he tries to calm Giselle and direct her to her mother during her hysteria.

Act II possesses moments which seem to step from the lithographs themselves: Myrtha's second entrance is along a track which produces a momentary image of flight. Giselle's first appearance to Albrecht from the leafy fastnesses of the forest is straight from a Romantic engraving. The slow motion effects of the high lifts are dream-like in quality. How familiar we all are with the lithograph of Giselle swept forward on the branch of a tree from which she scatters flowers to the kneeling Albrecht below, yet this is the first time we have seen it transferred to the stage—and how perfect it is. Later, when Myrtha's power is broken, how clear are her instructions to Giselle to entice Albrecht from the shelter of the cross into a frenzied dance. After the warning bell of dawn has struck, Myrtha and the Wilis leave the glade bourréeing slightly backwards as if drawn by some invisible force once again to their yawning graves. Giselle and Albrecht are left alone for a final farewell. He carries her for a moment in his arms (an exquisite pose) before she momentarily dims his eyes and his memory, vanishing into the enveloping foliage. Only the token of the lily reminds him it has not been a dream. He retrieves the flower, knowing through it that Giselle forgives him.

Ulanova's Giselle is a completely credible performance. She accepts the premise that Giselle is very young, fragile and fey, yet simple. She is flattered by Albrecht's attentions, impressed by his manners, delighted to let her fantasies of the future run away with her, yet peasant enough to be superstitious. She is deeply affectionate toward her mother and relaxed with her friends, completely in step with her surroundings. She makes a point of her short-windedness at the end of their first duet, therefore her mother's grumbling comes as no surprise and we know her malady is something of which she is cognizant. Ulanova's peasant is real. She is never a ballerina playing a role. Her face glows when she sees Bathilde's gown as she slowly clasps her hands together in a gesture of radiant admiration and wonderment. Then and only then does she seem almost enticed to touch the hem of the dress. It is not a self-conscious gesture, but one made by a little girl for one moment in fairyland. When Bathilde gives her the necklace, she is once again that self-same little girl looking at a star which is suddenly in her possession.

Ulanova's mad scene is closer to a suggestion of panic and then a gradual departure from reality. She gives the familiar mime new-found dimensions. For example: the counting of the invisible flowers is now more a suggestion than a series of definitive gestures. Her hands move away from the fantasy flower and flutter in ever widening circles, still reminiscent of picking off the tell-tale petals yet delineating the actual deterioration of reality. Seconds after we sense the peripheral break-up, she moves—rushing in a frenzy first to Hilarion then to her mother and then for the final movement —to Albrecht. Her moments at rest are like pauses in music—we are hardly aware of them, they are so integral to her musical and dramatic intuitiveness of this scene.

Ulanova's Act II is slow, sustained and, except for the moment of her initiation into the Wilis, almost slow-motion. Even the air seems to hang, floating upon the hands of some ghostly clock, its motion arrested. She is completely the apparition but everywhere there is a sense of love . . . a strange, unsated yearning that will permeate the glen for ever.

Nicolai Fadeyechev as Albrecht is a skilful and devoted partner. His Prince is young, sensitive, and romantic although a dâllier. His passages alone with Giselle in Act I are extraordinarily tender. Act II shows Fadeyechev technically well equipped and capable of a light Romantic tenor throughout.

Raissa Struchkova elects to play Giselle as a popular and outwardly robust peasant girl whose undoing is a nervous temperament and a weak heart. She is charming, delightful, never odd and utterly beguiling. Her Giselle is sincere, unspoiled, completely a country girl yet very feminine. When she see's Bathilde's dress, her eyes seem to glow like those of a young girl at her first ball. She is overwhelmed by the gift of the necklace for clearly it is almost too fantastic to touch and only after her mother confirms that it is really hers, does she show it off gleefully to her friends. Her mad scene is frenzied, short and dramatic. It is to her mother that she turns in death.

Oddly enough, it is Struchkova's Act II which is her strongest. Technically equipped to use speed in varying amounts for colouring and emphasis, she realizes all the musical potentialities of Act II. Her exit after her solo in a series of jetés which gradually gather flying momentum is a never-to-be-forgotten dance moment. There are so many pure dance points with which to be delighted: high, arched arabesques; that incredible ballon with which all the Soviet girls appear to be gifted; clean, fast pirouettes, and a good sense of musical phrasing. She imparts to Act II a feeling of sincerity and humility.

Yuri Zhdanov as Albrecht is a superb Prince. His Albrecht is not a young prince, he is a nobleman deliberately at play. He is heedless of the disaster he bears Giselle, indeed totally unaware of the extent to which such a situation can veer from control. His attitude toward the Duke presupposes that peccadilloes of gentlemen go unspoken. He is thoroughly a rogue, yet a sympathetic one. His best moments are afforded by Act II. Indeed, it is Zhdanov and he alone who gently, poetically brings the act to a close. What a superb moment of stage craftsmanship as he lifts the symbolic rose and presses it gratefully to his heart.

Liudmilla Bogomolova and Lev Evdokimov, two very gifted dancers, performed the Peasant Pas de Deux for Act I of the Struchkova-Zhdanov Giselle. Evdokimov boasts a fine batterie and plenty of speed. Bogomolova is a strong dancer who has brio and a ballerina's sense of stage presence. Marina Kondratieva who alternates in the role is a lovely, lyrical dancer with speed and most gratifying sense of period. For the Ulanova-Fadeychev Giselle, the Peasant Pas de Deux was danced by Evdokimov and the 19-year-old star soloist of the company, Ekaterina Maximova. Maximova is beautiful, has a certain charm and a strong but not reliable technique. Perhaps, she is yet too young to possess a sense of period.

Both Alexander Lapauri and Vladimir Levashev alternate as Hilarion. Lapauri

—Continued on page 22, column 3

REPORT FROM

Denmark

by

GERARD BOURKE

DANISH FESTIVAL

The Peacock Theatre in the Tivoli Gardens, Copenhagen, home of Danish Pantomime. *Photo:* Inga Aistrup

Hanne Marie Ravn and Flemming Flindt in *Moonreindeer* by Birgit Cullberg.

ONE year the Danes should include Tudor's ballet *Jardin aux Lilas* in the programme of their Royal Ballet and Music Festival, since during the last two weeks in May the whole country—but especially the central island, Funen, birthplace of Hans Andersen and Carl Nielsen, and known as "The garden of Denmark"—becomes a Lilac Garden. This year the Danes showed again how a tradition that spans more than 200 years has brought them both an important repertory and a well grounded company. With Erik Bruhn resident again after periods with Ballet Theatre and the Marquis de Cuevas's company, Flemming Flindt home from Festival Ballet, and Kjeld Noack recovered from last year's accident, the company has, we must suppose, the finest team of male dancers outside Russia.

This year the chief interest lay in performances of three ballets by the Swedish choreographer, Birgit Cullberg. Last spring I reviewed her new ballet *Moonreindeer* which I saw with Henning Kronstam as Nilas; this time Flemming Flindt took the part—with Hanne Marie Ravn as the reindeer who leads young Lapps over a precipice to their death—and I can well understand why the Danes think his interpretation here is ideal. How this ballet captures one is evident too: I remembered it clearly over the year, but drew much more from it this time. The music by Knudage Riisager, head of their conservatory, is most evocative of the north, and in its more compassionate parts derives much from Vaughan Williams in the string writing.

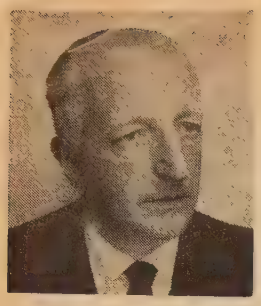
Miss Julie I saw twice, firstly with Henning Kronstam as Jean, the young butler overpowered by his mistress, and later with Erik Bruhn making his sole appearance during the festival—his knee forebade earlier appearances. The Danes' enthusiasm on his return was evident at once, and the whole performance was given on a much tenser, more impassioned level though Kirsten Simone appeared each time as Miss Julie. What a fine ballet it has become after, I hear, revision and tightening by the choregrapher; some people feel that *Moonreindeer* should be slightly condensed also. It is probably true that ballet is the right medium for this study in seduction, and Rangström's music (not written for the ballet, but drawn from his piano sketches of scenes near Stockholm) is suited perfectly to his friend's play. Kirsten Simone, while excellent technically, did not quite convey the required sense of torn aristocracy; she was merely a gay little flirt who wandered into the barn to join the midsummer-night revels. (The décor, for this scene in particular, was first-rate, executed by Sven Erixson). But one passage in the choreography definitely needs urgent revising, namely the scene where Miss Julie's ancestors come from their portraits to condemn her—at the moment, it is very muddled and underlit.

The third Cullberg ballet, new this year to Denmark, was *Medea* which I saw with Margrethe Schanne (the model for the new Danish stamp issued on the eve of the festival showing her in the famous leap in *La Sylphide*) and Henning Kronstam. This ballet, with music by Bartok, is well designed I feel for such a subject; but this very subject seems very unballetic, in fact the direct reverse of *Miss Julie*. Medea loses Jason to Creusa, daughter of King Creon and slays her children: some may like it, I do not. Nor was it well integrated with the music.

Margrethe Schanne did not, I regret to say, dance this year in the performance of Balanchine's *Night Shadow;* still my favourite ballet, had I to choose one. Kirsten Simone's dancing was not quite up to the part, as the drifting wraith, and her expression of childish simplicity, rather than utter sorrow, seemed wrong. Nor did Kronstam give just such an intense account of the poet's role as on other occasions: his partnership here with Schanne should not have been broken.

Chopiniana as the Danes call *Les Sylphides* to distinguish it from *La Sylphide*, was

(*Continued foot of column, next page*)



REPORT FROM Paris —By FERDINAND REYNA

DURING April the Théâtre des Nations presented under the title *Visages des Philippines* (Faces from the Philippines) a delightful show destined to please the public: it was not too long, unpretentious, and included very pretty costumes. The orchestra was a curious one: musicians in white jackets played the mandolin and other "tipica" instruments in the manner of café and casino bands. It was charming and amusing.

Many influences come together in the population of the Philippines, and accordingly are also to be found in Philippine dances. These people are of Malayan origin, but since the 15th century there has been an infiltration of a good many other races: Indian, Spanish, Chinese. In their religion Islam and Christianity mix together. As one might expect there is no distinct Philippine style of dancing. From time to time the mandolins fall into silence, and during religious and war dances one hears the sound of a gong, a gamelan or lengths of bamboo knocking against each other. The costumes are correspondingly varied: saris, long skirts and bodices of Spanish type for dances such as the jota, the polka-waltz, and the lancers-quadrille. And the whole show is presented with infinite grace and good taste. The company is directed by Mr. Alfredo Reyes and Miss Corazon Inigo (ballet mistress and choreographer), who has given the programme a seductive rhythm. After the performances for the Théâtre des Nations the show moved over for several days to the Théâtre des Champs Elysées, where it was equally successful.

Another company appearing in the Théâtre des Nations season was Pilar Lopez and her Spanish Ballet. As in the past, the male dancers in the company were of the highest quality. Alberto Portillo represents in a worthy manner classical Spanish dancing; Eduardo Serrano is a very young and fiery Flamenco dancer; Antonio Gades, the partner of Pilar Lopez, has a striking personality. Nana Lorca, who plays a leading part in a large number of the items, is just as pretty to look at as she is a fine dancer in a variety of styles. On the whole, however, the show gives a certain impression of monotony. Some of the costumes and sets are in doubtful taste, and the show as a whole lacks variety and invention.

The Stockholm Opera Ballet was presented for the Théâtre des Nations season by M. Rolf de Maré, who accompanied the dancers to Paris.

The company gave among other ballets *Swedish Rhapsody*, with music by Hugo Alfven, choreography by Björn Holmgren and Elsa Marianne von Rosen in the leading role. Gerd Andersson showed an acute dramatic sense and remarkable stage presence in *Miss Julie*, with choreography by Birgit Cullberg and music by Ture Rangstrom. *Moon-Reindeer* proved to be an interesting ballet in spite of some longueurs. Marianne Orlando—at times a queen, at times a young girl—stood out both for her animality and her poetry. The choreography of Birgit Cullberg is unremarkable. Even if these ballets did not create a scandal like those of Rolf de Maré, they were a revelation to Parisians who had never seen this company or its stars. The success of the season was *Medea*, inspired by the play of Euripides, with choreography by Birgit Cullberg and the principal parts danced by Gerd Andersson and Marianne Orlando. Balanchine has introduced this ballet into his repertoire.

Peter van Dijk, premier danseur étoile of the Paris Opéra, has had a fine success with his new ballet based on Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* and staged at the Opéra Comique. This is a very well constructed grand pas de deux which Peter van Dijk dances with Jacqueline Rayet, première danseuse at the Opéra. This ballet, which is entirely in classical style, wins over the public because of the profundity of its conception, expressed with an intense and vibrant poetry—the "passage from the life of two creatures on this earth, transposed into the unreal world of the dance," as the theme is described in the programme. Peter van Dijk, who is already known as a choreographer through his previous work, shows here a talent which is now more than promising.

Roland Petit presented at the Théâtre de l'Alhambra his new ballet *Cyrano de Bergerac*, lasting an entire evening; for this he has assembled a large and excellent company of 57, including a number of acrobats and a list of dancers headed by Zizi Jeanmaire, Tessa Beaumont, Danièle Jossi, José Ferran, Lucien Mars, Georges Reich and Roland Petit himself. His audacity served him well, for the ballet is a success, being vigorous and dynamic. It has two acts and seven scenes; the story is based on the famous play by Edmond Rostand, the music is by Marius Constant, the settings (reasonably good ones) are by José Basarte, and the ravishing costumes are by Yves Saint Laurent, the successor of Christian Dior. Choreographically *The Battle of the Bridge*, *The Dance of the Little Burnt Almonds*, *The Balcony Pas de Trois* and *The Battle Scene under the Walls of Arras* come off very well. Roland Petit, as Cyrano, was droll and gallant under his wide plumed hat and his enormous nose. Roxane was danced by Zizi Jeanmaire, who did not seem to us to establish the romantic, sensitive and noble character of the Rostand play. Undoubtedly the role would have better suited Tessa Beaumont, who had great success in the role of the hostess Lise Ragueneau. It was very difficult to make a successful ballet out of *Cyrano*, but Roland Petit has done this with astonishing audacity and skill.

DENMARK—*Continued from page 21*

danced by Schanne and Schaufuss both times I saw it. Her dancing here I liked greatly—and the recent orchestration in which prominent piano parts hold the important lines—but Frank Schaufuss gave, strangely enough, what seemed too impersonal a performance, almost automatic. He is no longer ballet master and the current absence of one was reflected at times in slightly ragged corps de ballet work. It is still thought that Harald Lander will return there in the autumn to produce *Etudes* and two other ballets for the company. But, as is well known, there is a serious internal division towards him in the company.

Coppelia always suits the Royal Danish Ballet, Inge Sand being physically ideal as Swanilda and Niels Bjørn Larsen a rickety, bemused old toymaker—Fredbjorn Bjornsson I like, too, as Frantz. The pantomime theatre from Tivoli, of which he is the director, came to London recently and is regularly enjoyed by visitors to the festival who pause before its Peacock Theatre on warm summer nights. The way in which the Danish pantomime tradition infiltrates into the Royal Danish was seen this year not only in the company's good miming as a whole, but in Samuel Beckett's "Act without words" which was given at the end of a ballet programme. The study in frustration and resignation was admirably mimed by Niels Bjørn Larsen to music by John Beckett, the author's nephew.

There was a very full programme this year of seven operas—including the first performances outside Italy of Pizzetti's *Iphigenia*—and concerts including one at which Stravinsky conducted, and received the Sonning prize of £2,500, the largest ever awarded in Denmark to an artist. Consequently, I did not attend the ballet each evening, missing chiefly works which I knew well from other years. Those I regretted not seeing most were, in order, *La Sylphide*, *Harlequinade*—since I heard it was excellently performed—and *Giselle*. For the record, the others were *Napoli* Act III, *La Ventana*, *Serenade*, *Dancing School*, *Fanfare* and *The Whims of Cupid*, *Concerto Barocco* and *Graduation Ball*.

G. P. BOURKE

BOLSHOI SEASON—*Continued*

for the Struchkova performance and Levashev for the Ulanova performances. Lapauri is dramatic but perhaps a shade more appealing, not as crude. His Hilarion is tender and affectionate. Levashev is the better dancer. His gamekeeper is drawn on a broader, more violent, less detailed scale.

Myrtha is alternately danced by Maya Samokhvalova and Nina Timofeyeva. Samokhvalova makes of her a powerful, menacing demon. She possesses, besides a lovely and fluid bourrée, an extraodinary elevation and so quite naturally Myrtha becomes Queen of Air. Timofeyeva's Myrtha is softer, more à terre and, for me, a less satisfying stage figure.

Alexander Radunsky as the Duke and Elena Iliushchenko as Berthe support the stars with the authority and talent of two superb actors who know the full requirements of their roles.

Fortunately all performances were conducted by Yuri Faier who has broken precedent by being the first ballet conductor to be cheered by an audience. Well, he deserves it!

To be continued next month.

Alan Carter

Photo: Sabine Toepffer

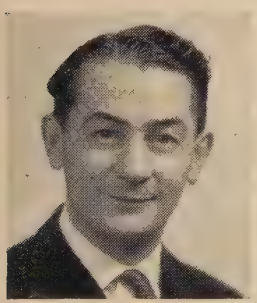
REPORT FROM Amsterdam

—By JANET SINCLAIR

NEWS of the month in Holland is that Alan Carter has accepted the position of co-Director and Choreographer with the newly-formed Amsterdam Ballet (55 dancers; Artistic Director, Mascha ter Weeme), and will begin working with the company in September. His decision to leave Munich after five years and considerable artistic success has been caused by a steady accumulation of many irritating factors, the most important of which is undoubtedly that the company has the chance to give a full ballet performance only thirty-five times a year.

To those who have any understanding of the confused situation obtaining in the Dutch ballet world it is obvious that the highly professional outlook of a personality such as Carter is exactly what is needed here. Helpmann apart, there can be few Englishmen in ballet with so wide an experience. A pupil of Astafieva and Legat, and one of the few examples of a male "infant prodigy," he inspired Ashton into creating what might be described as the finest male solo he ever arranged (in *Harlequin in the Street*, when Carter was only sixteen); at seventeen he was dancing the Rake at Sadler's Wells. He danced many other roles with the Sadler's Wells Ballet and Theatre Ballet, and since the war worked with the Empire Ballet, ran his own company, the St. James's Ballet, and has had experience of "the continental opera house" in Munich since 1954. In addition, he has made ballets of all and every type from the miniature *The Catch* to the full-scale *Prince of the Pagodas* and *Ondine*. This range of professionalism and experience cannot in reason be expected from the Dutch, whose ballet is, after all, only just over ten years old: but the material is here and waiting (indeed, the material, particularly the dancers' feet, is much better than in Germany, according to Carter) and it will be fascinating to watch the results of the first year's work of this new organisation.

The Netherlands Ballet has split neatly in half, with 21 dancers leaving and 21 staying. Six of the seceders are joining the Amsterdam Ballet; eleven plus Benjamin Harkarvy (ballet master) are forming an independent group and have been clever enough to secure, in addition to four of Holland's best dancers and the most promising young Dutch choreographer, the most astute business manager in Dutch ballet. What is to become of the remnants of Netherlands Ballet is not quite clear, though the little clique of "critics" whose motto seems to be "After Gaskell the deluge" are already busy attacking the seceders personally in the press, and pointing out that it couldn't matter less if the Netherlands Ballet has no dancers: what counts is the magnificent repertory (which seems like carrying the Hamlet - without - the - Prince - of - Denmark theory to extremes). Miss Gaskell has announced that Linda Manez and Joan Cadzow have signed contracts for next season, and that she hopes to make arrangements with various other foreigners, including Oleg Briansky: those who remember her similar announcement last year apropos Fadeyechev. Timofeyeva and other Soviet dancers may be forgiven for taking all this with a grain of salt.



REPORT FROM Tokyo

—BY JOHN HAYLOCK

THE Ballets de France de Janine Charrat came to Tokyo (May 14–18) after giving a series of performances at Osaka, the "Manchester" of Japan. An annual cultural festival is held at Osaka, and this year's festival, apart from the Janine Charrat Company, included the Vienna State Opera in The Marriage of Figaro and Don Giovanni, Stravinsky conducting his own compositions, and Andres Segovia.

Milorad Miskovitch, the guest artist with the Company, had been to Japan before, in 1955, and ballet fans in Tokyo were pleased to see him again. Mlle. Charrat's company is an efficient one whose members are competent, and their three programmes consisting of fifteen ballets were well received by Tokyo audiences who are by no means unsophisticated.

The *Romeo and Juliet* ballet to Tchaikovsky's overture, with choreography by Serge Lifar, was one of the most successful pieces in the repertoire. Mlle. Charrat and M. Miskovitch danced the two difficult parts excellently, portraying the famous story well; especially good was Miskovitch's pas seul representing his duel with Tybalt. The apotheosis at the end, after Juliet's suicide, seems rather to unbalance the end of this ballet which might be better if the curtain came down on Juliet's death.

In *Concerto*, the pas de deux with choreography by Mlle. Charrat and music from Grieg's piano concerto in A minor, Janine Charrat partnered by M. Juan Giuliano was at her best and danced with more ease and certainty than in *Romeo and Juliet*, perhaps this was because she was dancing to her own choreography. The two dancers thoroughly deserved the ovation they got at the end of this pas de deux. (*L'Etrangère de Paris*, music by Guy Bernard, choreography by Mlle. Charrat, was the best of the modern style ballets. Mlle. Josette Clavier was charming as the American girl, and M. Roland Casenave as her transient lover was elegant, and showed his interest and later his disinterest in the foreigner intelligently. The scene with the roughs whom he at first challenges and then pays off was adroitly performed and amusing. Less amusing was the old reprobate and the policeman who kept blowing his whistle: two stock characters this ballet could have done without.

Mlle. Charrat danced *La Mort du Cygne* with much grace and feeling. In *Domino*, music from Brahms' Variations, choreography by Mr. John Taras, the company showed they could go through their paces skilfully, and *Haut Voltage*, music by Marius Constant, choreography by Maurice Béjart, with M. Miskovitch as the Young Man, was interesting rather than electrifying. Among the other ballets performed were *Combat*, *Les Liens*, *Francesca de Rimini*, *Suite en Blanc*, *Don Quixote*, and *Les Algues*. The orchestra, the Chambre Symphonetto, a local Japanese symphony orchestra, was ably conducted by the company's music director M. Daniel Stirn.

New Books

Reviewed by . . . . PIGEON CROWLE

Nikitina. By Alice Nikitina. (*Wingate*, 21*s*.)

The fragile and graceful Alice Nikitina was one of the personalities of Diaghilev's later period. " The most adorable cat that ever danced in a talc petticoat," wrote W. A. Propert, first recorder of the *Ballets Russes* in England, after her performance in the title role of *La Chatte*, and she scored tremendous successes in such ballets as *Zephyr and Flora*, *Les Biches*, and *Apollon Musagéte*. There is no doubt that this young St. Petersburg dancer had great potentialities, but her constitution was not robust and her short career was beset with illness and strains. After his death and a spell in Cochrane revue she decided to become a colatura soprano, studying under Tetrazzini. Now she divides her time between singing and teaching ballet in Paris.

There are many glimpses of the famous personalities of the ballet world of the twenties but generally speaking, Nikitina's story as recounted by herself reads more like Hollywood's idea of glamour and the Russian ballet. There is the traditional opening as infant phenomenon when Preobrajenska takes the child from the beginners' class on her first day there and puts her among students already preparing for their final examinations, saying " This little girl will show you how to dance." Then the flight from Russia and eventually the period with Diaghilev and pearls and caviare, intrigues and jealousies, despairing crises and triumphant successes. All described with a rather disarming ingenuousness and obvious delight in the opulent and chi-chi atmosphere of palace hotels and fashionable watering places. For she soon became the friend of one of Diaghilev's richest patrons, " Lord R ", a newspaper baron, some twenty years her senior, who wished to adopt her as his daughter. This plan as such fell through, but he declared that " an artist had to have a car " (chauffeur-driven); so Alice chose a cream Panhard lined with red velvet, to be followed up with sables, a lady's maid, luxurious holidays and " cures ". All this and having Lord R. at her bedside during an illness " with a worried look on his face and a magnificent chain of platinum with rubies, diamonds and pearls in his hand ", must have done much to soften the rigours of life in the *Ballets Russes*. Take this book on your holiday, it is the best of its kind I have read since Nicolas Bentley's *Ballet Hoo*.

A Dictionary of Modern Ballet. Ed. by Gadan & Maillard. (*Methuen*, 36*s*.)

This is a dictionary only in the sense that the entries are in alphabetical order. In fact, it is a collection of some 650 articles describing the personalities and achievements of twentieth century ballet since Diaghilev and his *Ballets Russes* first arrived in Western Europe in 1909. Ballets such as *Giselle* and *Lac* and the names of Tchaikovsky and Petipa are included because they are so much a part of the contemporary scene.

There are some inconsistencies in that a ballet such as *Abraxos* with choreography by Charrat for the Berlin State Opera, is given a full historical note, whereas, for example, that under the heading of *The Clock Symphony* contains only the essential names and date of presentation. True, this Sadler's Wells ballet was not a success and had only a few performances, but it was the work of such distinguished artists as Massine and Bérard and, for a reference book, a short précis of its theme and brief history should be available.

The small and numerous illustrations that adorn the text have been assembled with care and thought, and—photographs, drawings, designs for decor and costumes, or posters and programmes—are all excellent examples of the blockmaker's art. Those in colour positively glow from the pages. Altogether a most attractive and informative book that will appeal to all ballet lovers.

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A DICTIONARY OF MODERN BALLET

Edited by Francis Gadan and Robert Maillard, assisted by Ronald Crichton and Mary Clarke.

METHUEN

Recordings

Reviewed by . . . . BEDFORD CROWLE

POÈMES DANSÉS

Two *poèmes dansés* have had recent revivals, Debussy's *Jeux* by Ballet Theatre and Dukas' *La Péri* by the Royal Ballet—Ashton's exotic vehicle for the diverse art of Fonteyn. Ansermet's interpretations, Decca LXT5454, which also include Debussy's *Danse*, are beyond criticism. The opening fanfare to *La Péri*, which Dukas added to his original score, is not played at Covent Garden. This is a ballet record to be recommended enthusiastically on all counts.

THE ELEMENTS

Wakefield Poole, who joined Ballet Theatre, set his ballet to Khachaturian's well-known piano concerto and Pye have recently issued a first class recording of it, CCL30151. The performance is also of the front rank—Sir Adrian Boult and the LPO encourage the brilliant young Roumanian pianist, Mindru Katz. He does not treat it simply as a piece for the virtuoso but gives it more feeling and expression than is generally the case.

FRENCH BALLET MUSIC

Very little need be said of Beecham's performances on HMV ALP1656, as I doubt if we will hear their equal in our lifetime. Even that old war-horse, the ballet music from *Faust*, has had its face lifted, while the ballet music from Grétry's *Zémire et Azor*, Delibes' *Le Roi s'amuse* and Massenet's *Valse* from *Cendrillon*, are sheer delight. I only wish we could have had the whole of Bizet's symphonic suite, *Roma*, which Balanchine choreographed for the New York City Ballet. The recording matches Sir Thomas.

CONTES RUSSES

Liadov's symphonic poems, *Kikimora*, *The Enchanted Lake* and *Baba-Yaga*, in this very Russian collection on HMV. ALP1632, formed the setting of Massine's *Contes Russes* and have all the mystery, colour and fantasy of the Russian fairytale. Prokofiev's witty and melodic *Overture on Hebrew Themes* was chosen by Skibine for his brief but compelling ballet, *Le Retour*, and merits hearing more often. Finally we have Rimsky-Korsakov's glittering *Capriccio Espagnole*, which attracted such choreographers as Massine, Greco and Amaya. All these works, and Liadov's engaging *Musical Snuff-Box* are treated with understanding and imagination by Kurtz conducting the R.P.O. in another excellent ballet record.

IL RITORNO

It takes a light and happy heart to appreciate to the full this gay and romantic music. Françoise Adret must have enjoyed every moment when setting her ballet, *Il Ritorno*, to Mendelssohn's *Fourth Symphony*. A concert performance must also grow out of these and other qualities, so that I find Georg Solti's, Decca LXT5477, tendency to robustness lacks the essential and delicate charm. Schubert's *Fifth Symphony*, on the reverse side, similarly suffers—I prefer Schmidt-Isserstedt's rendering and for the Mendelssohn, Cantelli's.

THE WANDERER

The first night of Ashton's ballet, *The Wanderer*, was fraught with discussion and argument in the auditorium. Everyone had their own, often somewhat bewildered view as to its significance and symbolism. But Schubert's music and the innocently romantic "pink pas-de-deux", which seemed out of this world, saved the day for many who were floundering. The score originally was for the piano and Claudio Arrau gives the finest and most satisfying performance I have heard, Columbia 33CX1558, and the piano tone is excellent. He also makes the *Drei Klavierstücke* (D.946) seem far better than they really are.

LA TRAGÉDIE DE SALOMÉ

This ballet with music by the French composer, Florent Schmitt, was first danced in Paris by the American dancer Loïe Fuller. Revivals followed but owing to his Wagnerian tendencies, the composer failed to find much favour in his own country, despite his many Debussian touches. However the Paris Opera revived it for Darsonval in 1954 and now Mercury, MMA11013, gives us the opportunity to study its attractive and interesting score. Paray, conducting the Detroit SO, gives a forceful, if straightforward, reading which also applies to Strauss's *Dance of the Seven Veils* and Lalo's *Namouna*, Suite No. 1. Recording satisfactory.

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15th–18th July	*Sylphides, London Morning, Grand Pas de Deux, Prince Igor.*
20th–21st ,,	*Swan Lake (Act II), London Morning, Etudes.*
22nd–27th ,,	*Swan Lake (Act II), London Morning, Grand Pas de Deux, Symphony for Fun.*
28th July–1st Aug.	*Napoli, London Morning, Graduation Ball.*

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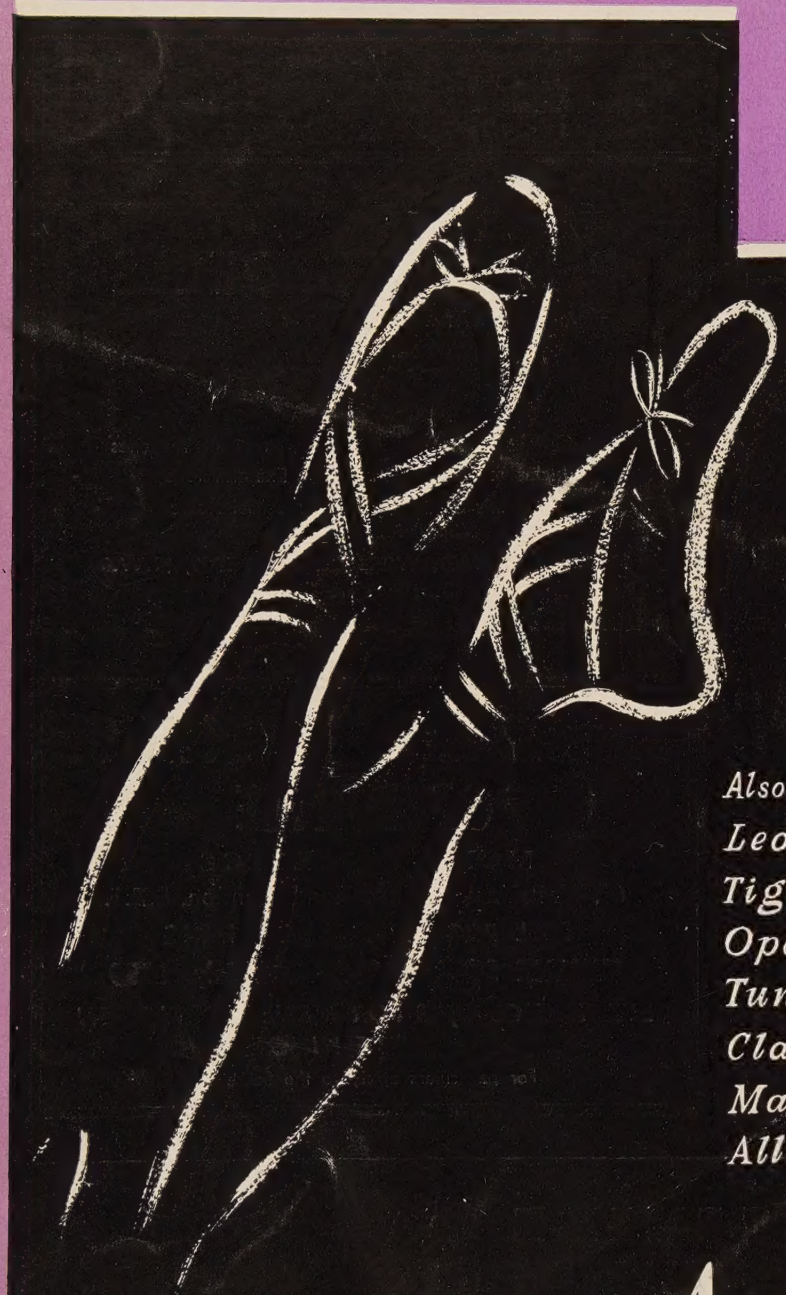

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